THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA

THE ECUMENICAL ECCLESIOLOGY OF MAX THURIAN, BROTHER OF THE COMMUNITY OF TAIZE: A CATHOLIC APPRAISAL

A DISSERTATION

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Brother Edward Davis, F.S.C.

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This dissertation was approved by

R. Kevin Seasoltz, O.S.B. as director,

and by J. A. Ross Mackenzie. and

Emily M. Binns as readers.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS USED

CFS	Thurian, *Confession*, trans. by Edwin Hudson, Studies in Ministry and Worship (London: SCM Press, Ltd., 1958).
CON	Thurian, *Consecration of the Layman: New Approaches to the Sacrament of Confirmation*, trans. by W. J. Kerrigan (Baltimore: Helicon Press, 1963).
EM	Thurian, *The Eucharistic Memorial*, trans. by J. G. Davies, Ecumenical Studies in Worship, Nos. 7 and 8 (2 vols.; Richmond, Va.: John Knox Press, 1961).
HMV	Thurian, *L'homme moderne et la vie spirituelle* (Taizé, France: Les Presses de Taizé, 1964).
ICR	John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, ed. by John T. McNeill, trans. by Ford Lewis Battles, The Library of Christian Classics, Vols. XX and XXI (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1960).
InET	Thurian, "Introductory Essay," *The Eucharistic Liturgy of Taizé*, trans. by John Arnold (London: The Faith Press, 1962).
JCT	Thurian, *Joie du ciel sur la terre: Introduction à la vie liturgique* (Paris and Neuchâtel: Delachaux et Niestlé, S.A., 1946).
LTM	Thurian, *Love and Truth Meet*, trans. by C. Edward Hopkin (Philadelphia: Pilgrim Press, 1968).
MMC	Thurian, *Mary, Mother of all Christians*, trans. by Neville B. Cryer (New York: Herder and Herder, 1964).
MrCl	Thurian, *Marriage and Celibacy*, trans. by Norman Emerton, Studies in Ministry and Worship, No. 10 (London: SCM Press, Ltd., 1959).
OB	Thurian, *The One Bread*, trans. by Theodore DuBois (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1969).
RPV	Thurian and Roger Schütz, *Revelation: A Protestant View*, trans. by Kathryn Sullivan, R.S.C.J. (Westminster, Md.: Newman Press, 1968).
VC	*Verbum Caro*
VUT	Thurian, *Visible Unity and Tradition*, trans. by W. J. Kerrigan (Baltimore: Helicon Press, 1962).

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Max Thurian was born in Geneva, Switzerland, August 16, 1921. In that city he completed his classical and theological studies and was ordained a pastor in the Reformed Church on February 17, 1946. In January, 1942, he had encountered Pastor Roger Schütz, who had the intention of founding, within the communion and tradition of the Reformed Church, a cenobitic community. He joined with Schütz, and with a third brother, began this life of community, with its liturgical center for two years in the Cathedral of St. Peter in Geneva.

In October of 1944, the three brothers returned to Taizé, a small village near Cluny in Burgundy, where Schütz had previously lived, alone, a dedicated life. On Easter Sunday, April 17, 1949, the Brothers of Taizé, now seven in number, pronounced lifetime vows of celibacy, community of goods, and obedience.[1]

Brother Max is now assistant prior of the Taizé Community and is engaged in theological and liturgical research and writing.

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[1] Information from a personal letter from Max Thurian, July 11, 1966. Other sources list four original brothers: in addition to Thurian and Schütz, there were Daniel de Montmillon and Pierre Souverain.

The Problem and Its Scope

This study attempts to investigate the ecumenical ecclesiology of Max Thurian. It is first of all necessary, therefore, to make known his thought on the mystery of the Church and on all the aspects and constitutive parts of this mystery: Word and ministry, liturgy and sacraments. Second, the dimension of Christian unity will be sought out in his theological ideas. Further, assuming that all of Thurian's work has an ecumenical orientation, it will be necessary to examine precisely what he means by "ecumenicity," and to analyze his contributions in this light.[1]

The investigation aims at the presentation and analysis of the work of Max Thurian. Roger Schütz, Taizé, and other theologians and theological currents will be examined only to cast light upon and clarify this central purpose.

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[1] In addition to his writings, Thurian is engaged in ecumenical activity both varied and important. This must be so at Taizé; for the purpose, the raison d'être of the Community is ecumenism: the ultimate visible unity of all Christians, the reconciliation of all deeply divided persons and forces in this modern world. Along with Schütz, Thurian has made several trips to Rome, where he has explained the ecumenical work and the spirit of Taizé to Popes Pius XII, John XXIII, and Paul VI. Both Schütz and Thurian were observers at the Second Vatican Council. During the fourth session of the Council, they lived at Rome, with other brothers, in an apartment where they lived the monastic life and received numerous bishops and theologians.

Brother Max also acts as adviser in the researches of the Faith and Order section of the World Council of Churches. He has participated in the world meetings of this body and of the World Council, most recently at Uppsala (1968). With Schütz, he visited Patriarch Athenagoras I at Constantinople in 1962 in order to establish contact between Orthodoxy and the Community of Taizé. (information from a personal letter from Max Thurian, July 11, 1966).

Review of the Literature

The sources used in this study include first of all the written works of Thurian. He is the author of eleven books and more than forty articles.[1] None of these sources is either entirely or directly a theology of the Church. There is one chapter in Amour et verité se rencontrent (1964) entitled "L'Eglise" (pp. 109-17), but this book is, by its own subtitle, a simple catechism, and gives very little more than a bare outline statement. Other books and articles deal with aspects of the Church, notably with the sacraments and ministry, or deal obliquely with the Church, for example, Marie, mère du Seigneur, figure de l'Eglise (1963). It has been necessary, therefore, to glean his ecclesiology from reference, mention, typological inference, and sentences at random throughout the literature, and to attempt a synthesis of this thought according to a plan which, among other possibilities, seems to emerge from a general overview of Thurian's thought. It must not be forgotten that the ecumenical dimension, although expressed most directly in _L'Unité visible des chrétiens et la tradition_ and in several articles, is present also throughout his work, as much by implication and tone as by direct statement.

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[1] In chronological order of publication, the books are: Joie du ciel sur la terre: Introduction à la vie liturgique (1946); La confession (1953); Mariage et célibat (1955); La confirmation: Consécration de laïcs (1957); L'Eucharistie, mémorial du Seigneur: Sacrifice d'action de grâce et d'intercession (1959); L'Unité visible des chrétiens et la tradition (1961); L'Homme moderne et la vie spirituelle (1961); Marie, mère du Seigneur, figure de l'Eglise (1963); Amour et verité se rencontrent: Simple exposé de la foi chrétienne (1964); Le pain unique: Simple réflexion sur l'Eucharistie et la ministère (1967); La foi en crise (1968). In addition to these, he is co-author (with Roger Schütz) of La parole vivante au concile (1966).

The majority of his articles appear in Verbum Caro (1947-   ), of which journal Thurian is editor. Some of the articles appearing elsewhere are repetitions or translations of those from Verbum Caro. Frequently, also, one of his books will be partially or even entirely composed of articles previously published in Verbum Caro, usually with very minor or no changes.

His influence in the composition of the Office and Eucharist of Taizé is direct.

These primary sources have been supplemented by, first of all, several interviews with Thurian, two of which have reached publication and two of which were granted to the author of this study, and by personal letters and unpublished (mimeographed) materials.

The literature on Thurian is from one point of view rather large and from another, sparse. It is large in the number of books and articles which are of some value for the understanding of his theology, but sparse insofar as most of these books are either necessary background and context only, or touch upon Thurian's theology in but the briefest and most cursory manner. Most of the articles are reviews of his books. These latter are valuable, of course, only as they illumine, expose, or criticize his ecclesiological thought. This has eliminated a great number of reviews which have been very short--little more than summaries of the book in question--or which have appeared in popular rather than scholarly journals, with the resultant popular orientation.[1]

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[1] Therefore, for example, Cornelius Ernst's fine review of _Marie, mère du Seigneur_, "Mary: Sign of Contradiction or Source of Unity?" _Clergy Review_, New Series, XLIX (September,

Finally, some relevant unpublished works, chiefly doctoral dissertations, have been helpful.

There is, clearly, no one single book or article, whether by Thurian or about him, which comes to grips with the central problem of this study: his ecumenical ecclesiology. It is to be hoped that this effort will both fill that unfortunate gap and provide a possible basis for further research.

The gap is unfortunate because, although Thurian has written often and well of the sacraments, of ministry, of the unity of Christians, of the Word of God, and of the life of prayer, it is his ecclesiology which must remain both the foundation and the summit of his theology. All of the things of which he has written must find their ground and their life in the mystery of the Church of God. Without this unifying foundation they would be sterile, and indeed incomprehensible. And it is to the Church that all of his theology ultimately must lead: "L'Eglise reste la communauté de l'espérance."[1]

Division of the Dissertation

Before examining directly the ecclesiological thought of Thurian, it is necessary to set the stage, to form a context. Thus, Chapter II will deal with the sources of Thurian's

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1964), pp. 539-51, has been used, whereas J. Gallagher's review of L'Unité visible, appearing in the Fall, 1964, issue of Catholic World (p. 198) has not. Nor have the references for these many popular reviews been included in the bibliography.

[1] Max Thurian, La foi en crise (Taizé: Les Presses de Taizé, 1968), p. 14.

theology, chiefly with the Calvinist tradition and the particular theology of the Community of Taizé. Chapter III will attempt to isolate the center and foundation of his ecclesiology: the mystery and life of the Church. The Word of God and the word in the Church, liturgy, the Eucharist, prayer and sacraments will be presented in Chapters IV and V. Chapters VI and VII treat of ministry: first of all the ministry of the Church, the entire people of God, to the world, and then the ordained and charismatic ministry in the Church which exists for the benefit of the Church. Chapter VIII will summarize the ecumenical dimension of all of Thurian's ecclesiology. Finally, Chapter IX will summarize the results of the research and draw certain conclusions. The conclusions of the study will be in the nature of both a presentation of key concepts in Thurian's ecumenical and ecclesiological thought, and an appraisal of his work from a Roman Catholic viewpoint. A bibliography follows the study.

CHAPTER II

THE WELLSPRINGS OF THURIAN'S ECCLESIOLOGY

Introduction

Max Thurian is a man and a theologian very much of the twentieth century. But he is a man also with deep roots. Born in Geneva, he was reared in a Swiss Protestant milieu in the very city of John Calvin. He is an ordained pastor of the Reformed Church. It is evident that his theological thought and his very Christian life would find their source in Calvin. But the Reformed Church sees the Gospel not through the eyes of Calvin alone. Therefore, for a more thorough understanding of Thurian, it is necessary to examine the ecclesiology of those men who have most influenced both the course of Continental Protestantism and the theology of Thurian: Huldrich Zwingli and Martin Bucer[1] (in addition to Calvin) in the sixteenth century, and Karl Barth in the twentieth century.

The most powerful influence on Thurian's thought has been, of course, his association from his days as a theological student to the present day with Roger Schütz and the Community of Taizé. Therefore, the concept of the Church of Christ as envisioned by Schütz and as lived at Taizé must be examined. These are the wellsprings of Thurian's theology. In the words of Paupert:

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[1] also often spelled Butzer.

> It might almost be said. . . that Brother Roger is, in his theological thought, a "liberal" in the style of Tommy Fallot, who is known to have found his bones and sinews in Barthism, while Brother Max would be orthodox in the manner of Barth, animated by a "liberal" spirit . . . . The one and the other [are] closely fused, and enriched in and by the Community.[1]

This chapter will not treat of these men in strictly chronological order. Rather, the paramount formative influences, Calvin and Roger Schütz, are treated first and last, respectively. Zwingli, Bucer, and Barth follow Calvin as complementary; and the Church as lived at Taizé acts as a setting or context for the thoughts of Schütz.

Without doubt, other men and other movements have influenced Thurian, and often to a great extent.[2] If Thurian were to be asked from what source he draws his theology of the Church, he would unhesitatingly answer that it is from the Gospels and from the living tradition of the Church herself. And this is true. Thus, the men and the Community that are summarized here are never more than subsidiary streams, formative influences, on a theology which is as much as possible evangelical, which finds its true origin in the Word of God.

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[1] Jean-Marie Paupert, _Taizé et l'Eglise de demain_ (Paris: Le Signe/Fayard, 1967), p. 208.

In all quotations in the text of this dissertation for which a French title is cited as source, the translations are mine.

[2] Specific mention might have been made here of Roman Catholic theology, particularly modern thinkers, and of the French pastor Charles Drelincourt (1595-1669), for whom Thurian obviously has great admiration.

John Calvin (1509-1564)

The Church

John Calvin's doctrine of the Church can perhaps best be understood when it appears as a manifestation of his theology of election and covenant.[1] The Church should be thought of in the context of election, and election is to be placed in the context, and as a corollary, of soteriology.

> The Covenant is the historical setting of election. It is broader than election. This is particularly shown in the history of the Jewish people, who are children of the gracious Covenant made in Christ with Abraham. Christians are children of the same Covenant, thereby asserting the unity of Scripture, law and gospel in the one Covenant mediated by Christ.[2]

Because this doctrine of election takes everything out of our hands, in reality it leaves us securely abiding in the ultimate certainty of God.[3] Thus we live in the Covenant, rooted in Christ through election and drawn by him towards fulfillment.

The Church, ultimately, is composed of the whole number of the elect.[4] These elect have with faith accepted both their predestination and the remission of their sins shown forth to them by means of the Word of God in the Gospel and the sacramental signs.[1] As such, the Church is invisible.

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[1] John Ernest Burkhart, "Kingdom, Church, and Baptism: The Significance of the Doctrine of the Church in the Theology of John Calvin" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Southern California, Los Angeles, 1959), p. 85.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 84.

[3] Wilhelm Niesel, *The Theology of Calvin*, trans. by Harold Knight (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1956), p. 190.

[4] John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, ed. by John T. McNeill, trans. by Ford Lewis Battles, The Library of Christian Classics, Vol. XXI (London: S.C.M. Press, Ltd., 1961), IV.i.2. Hereinafter referred to as ICR.

But there is a visible Church. This is the number of the Remnant: "The Church extends beyond any visible form, so that no institution can capture the fullness of the Church; and yet the Church as we know it is but a remnant marked by pure preaching and proper sacraments."[2] This visible Church is not a rigid institution, but a living organism, a fellowship of mutual service and helpfulness.[3] Not all who show themselves externally faithful, or who belong to a particular visible church, really belong to the Church of the Elect; conversely, whoever is a member of the Church of the Elect cannot ever fall from it, even if he is not now recognized as such externally.[4]

The whole Church will be revealed in fullness only at the Last Day. The invisible Church is the Final Church.[5] Thus the particular church in which we live is not simply identical with the Body of Christ.[6] Rather, the Church is the society of Christ which is becoming the Body of Christ;

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[1] Charles Claereboets, S.J., Ecclesiologia Joannis Calvini in sua Evolutione Historica (Rome: Scuola Tipografica Pio X, 1941), p. 43.

[2] Burkhart, "Kingdom, Church, and Baptism," p. 103.

[3] ICR, IV.i.2.

[4] Claereboets, Ecclesiologia, pp. 43-44. See ICR, IV.i.2, 4, 7.

[5] Burkhart, "Kingdom, Church, and Baptism," p. 135.

[6] Niesel, The Theology of Calvin, p. 192.

it derives its vigor from the Ascended Christ who is bringing his people towards fulfillment.[1]

Church and Kingdom, Kingdom and Church are closely related in the thought of Calvin. But they are also sharply distinguished. With him the Church is not at all identical with the Kingdom. Her boundaries are much narrower than those of the Kingdom; her radius of action is much more restricted. The Church is for the sake of the Kingdom, and never the Kingdom for the sake of the Church. The Church must place herself in the service of the Kingdom.[2]

The marks of the true Church (visible) are the unadulterated proclamation of the Word and due celebration of the sacraments.[3] As such, it is the sphere of encounter between Christ and ourselves, a divinely ordained institution in this world.[4] The visible Church is the society of the faithful who agree to follow the Word of God and that pure religion which depends on it.[5]

> The Church is known by what it does, and not by what it is. A gathering of Christians is not the Church. A building is not the Church. The Church is the people as

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[1] Burkhart, "Kingdom, Church, and Baptism," p. 133.

[2] G. Brillenburg Wurth, "Calvin and the Kingdom of God," in John Calvin, Contemporary Prophet: A Symposium, ed. by Jacob Tunis Hoogstra (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1959), pp. 115; 124.

[3] ICR, IV.i.9. See Burkhart, "Kingdom, Church, and Baptism," pp. 148ff.

[4] Niesel, The Theology of Calvin, p. 185.

[5] John H. Kromminga, "Calvin and Ecumenicity," in John Calvin, Contemporary Prophet: A Symposium, ed. by Jacob Tunis Hoogstra (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1959), p. 163.

> they assemble for the Word and the sacraments. To be sure, the people are the Church.[1]

The Church is our Mother, and outside the Church there is no salvation.[2]

The Word in the Church

In the Church, the Word is made incarnate. Jesus Christ is present today in his ministers, proclaiming his Word, and this proclamation of the Gospel arouses the response of faith. The Church has no control over this Gospel committed to her; rather she stands under the judgment of the Word. And the Word cannot be treated as a piece of ancient tradition, but must be spread abroad audibly.[3]

Ministry

Ministry in the Church, according to Calvin, is the principal sinew which holds believers together in one body. It is the ministry which promotes the upbuilding of the Body of Christ.[4] The permanently necessary orders in the Church, based upon Saint Paul, are pastors, doctors, elders, and deacons. The most important are the pastors, who preach and administer the sacraments.[5] The duty of the doctors is to test the preaching of the Church against the Scriptures, and to train pastors.[1] Elders, together with the pastors, exercise discipline,[2] and deacons serve the bodily needs of the community.[3]

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[1] Burkhart, "Kingdom, Church, and Baptism," p. 151.

[2] ICR, IV.i.4.

[3] Niesel, The Theology of Calvin, p. 187. See ICR, IV.i.1; III.i.

[4] Burkhart, "Kingdom, Church, and Baptism," p. 136.

[5] ICR, IV.iii.4.

All ministry, of course, is service, not prerogative or office. The choice of a man for a particular ministry is given to the pastors plus the congregation as a whole.[4] But ministry itself does not depend on the election or decision of the congregation; rather, it is from "on high," willed by Christ for his Church and thus divinely instituted. The Lord chooses to govern his Church through the ministry of men. It is really Christ himself who rules in the Church and who exercises authority by his Word alone: Christ is the minister of the Church. "_It is He Himself_ [Christ] _who gives to His Church pastors and teachers who, according to His command, direct the Word and the Power of the Keys in an orderly and regular way_. . . ."[5]

And Calvin re-inforces this concept of the divine origin of the ministry: "Whoever, therefore, either is trying to abolish this order of which we speak and this kind of government, or discounts it as not necessary, is striving for the undoing or rather the ruin and destruction of the church."[1]

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[1] ICR, IV.i.1.
[2] ICR, IV.iii.8.
[3] ICR, IV.iii.9.
[4] ICR, IV.iii.15.

[5] James L. Ainslie, _The Doctrine of Ministerial Order in the Reformed Churches of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries_ (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1940), p. 29. italics his. Thurian, too, follows the notion of authority from on high, in which he follows the thought of Phillipe-H. Menoud, _L'Eglise et les ministères selon le Nouveau Testament_ (Neuchâtel: Delachaux et Niestlé, 1948). See also Thurian, "Les grandes orientations actuelles de la spiritualité protestante," _Irénikon_, XXII (1949), pp. 380-81.

While the ministers of the Church have authority within the particular churches in things pertaining to worship and the conduct of exterior life, they have no authority whatever to bind anyone in conscience.[2]

Calvin does admit extraordinary ministries (apostles, prophets, healers), but these are temporary.[3] Nor does the community as a whole possess all the gifts and charisms, thus eliminating the need for an ordained ministry: "For Calvin's doctrine of orders, the New Testament vision of the Church as the body of Christ is fundamental, while the thought of the priesthood of all believers, which only too easily can be understood as a common possession of all the necessary gifts, plays no part in his doctrine."[4]

It is well known that Calvin recognizes no original and scriptural distinction between bishop and presbyter.[5] It is not so well known that he recognizes the legitimacy of the development of the episcopate in the patristic era.[6] Indeed, he goes further and treats without objection the rise of metropolitan bishops and patriarchs. The function and requirements of a bishop were that he not be subject to the pope, that he teach pure doctrine, and, most importantly, that he be the guardian of order (discipline) and maintain unity.[1]

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[1] ICR, IV.iii.2. See also Calvin, Commentary on Ephesians, IV.ii.

[2] Claereboets, Ecclesiologia, pp. 43-44.

[3] Niesel, The Theology of Calvin, pp. 201-02.

[4] Ibid., pp. 202-03. "The Reformed Churchmen [following after Calvin] did indeed teach the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers, but they also taught that drawn from and in the midst of that priesthood, there was to be an order of men to serve the Church in spiritual things." (Ainslie, Ministerial Order, p. 8).

[5] ICR, IV.iii.13.

[6] John T. McNeill, "Calvin and Episcopacy," The Presbyterian Tribune, LVII (June, 1942), p. 14.

> It should be recognized of course that most Calvinists who approved the historic episcopate. . . thought of it not as divinely instituted and basic to the Church, but as an early differentiation of the original ministry of the Word, an adjustment to needs that arose in the developing Church, permissible and even commendable but not essential. . . . The gap between this position and that in which the episcopate is held to be essential is a serious one.[2]

The Sacraments

The absolute primacy of the Word of God in the Church is made clear not only by Calvin's doctrine of the ministry--whose function is to preach the Word--but even more so by his doctrine of the sacraments. For the sacraments serve primarily to seal and confirm the Word, and to present the Word.[3] These sacraments express to us the promises of God in such a tangible way that we are as certain of them [the promises] as if they were before our very eyes. Their role is to _seal_ for us and to make effectual within us God's promise of grace and salvation.[4]

Further, the sacraments must have the word as well as the elements and ceremonies; a sermon is necessary in their administration.[1] This celebration also requires absolutely the presence and participation of the congregation.[2]

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[1] _Ibid_., pp. 14-16.

[2] _Ibid_., p. 16.

[3] Burkhart, "Kingdom, Church, and Baptism," p. 168. See also Kilian McDonnell, _John Calvin, the Church, and the Eucharist_ (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 1967), especially pp. 352-62.

[4] ICR, IV.xvii.1, 4; xiv.2.

It must not be thought, however, that Calvin agrees with the zwinglian ideas that the sacraments in no way give grace or contain what they signify or that they serve solely as a declaration of the faith and readiness of the individual Christian.

> The material species do not merely suggest to us the spiritual reality in order to strengthen our assurance and faith; they also effectively convey it to us. If the breaking of the bread is intended to show forth plainly that we are made participants in the body of Christ, we must not doubt that the Lord truly bestows on us His body. If He causes the visible token to be presented to us, then He gives us also His living body.[3]

It is hardly necessary to add that neither the word of the preacher nor the sacrament can be of any avail to us unless the Holy Spirit makes them effectual within us.[4]

There are two sacraments instituted by Christ and commanded by the New Testament. Baptism is a sign which confers on the believer three gifts: forgiveness of sins, dying and rising with Christ, and communion with the Lord.[5] The Lord's

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[1] ICR, IV.xiv.4. With regard to the rites, in fact, materials are of no importance (red or white wine, leavened or unleavened bread, etc.); variations are at the liberty of the congregation. Now and then it is good if complete uniformity does not prevail. (Niesel, The Theology of Calvin, pp. 206-07; cf. ICR, IV.xvii.43).

[2] ICR, IV.xvii.43-44.

[3] Niesel, The Theology of Calvin, p. 218. Cf. ICR, IV.xvii.10.

[4] Niesel, The Theology of Calvin, p. 216.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 220.

Supper is an eschatological meal, by which we are filled and drawn towards fulfillment until the coming of Christ.[1] The Church is in its essence a Eucharistic fellowship: it is the Lord's Table which creates the Church, which is common for all believers, which heals our divisions and brings us into one body.[2]

Boere affirms, and proves, that Calvin believed and taught the Real Presence: what we receive in the Supper is the Lord Jesus Christ himself.[3]

Unity

The Word, the ministry, the sacraments, the marks of the Church: all have a dimension of unity. In fact, the idea of a catholic unity dominated the church theory of Calvin. Practically, too, he exhibited always an ecumenical outlook and combined with his strict concept of doctrine a surprising degree of ecclesiastical liberalism:[4]

> [Among Christians] there ought to be so great a dislike of schism, as that they may always avoid it so far as lies in their power. There ought to prevail among them such a reverence for the ministry of the Word and of the sacraments, that wherever they perceive these to be, there they may consider the Church to exist. Whenever therefore it happens, by the Lord's permission, that the Church is

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[1] Burkhart, "Kingdom, Church, and Baptism," p. 140.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 149.

[3] John Anthony Boere, "Eucharist and Lord's Supper: The Real Presence in Ecumenical View" (unpublished S.T.D. dissertation, School of Sacred Theology, Catholic University of America, 1963), pp. 99ff. See also Paupert, *Taizé et l'Eglise*, pp. 232-33.

[4] John T. McNeill, *Unitive Protestantism* (Richmond, Va.: John Knox Press, 1964), p. 217.

> administered by pastors, whatever kind of persons they may be, if we see there the marks of the Church, it will be better not to break the unity. Nor need it be any hindrance that some points of doctrine are not so pure, seeing that there is scarcely any church which does not retain some remnants of former ignorance. It is sufficient for us if the doctrine on which the Church of God is founded be recognized and retain its place.[1]

Thus Calvin pleads for visible as well as invisible unity of the Church. For this unity, however, he demands unity of faith.[2] The deepest basis and final criterion of unity is the Word of God.[3] Doctrine, liturgy, and sacraments are forces and expressions of this unity, a unity leading ultimately to the full manifest body of Christ at the Parousia.

> The Lord grant, Sadoleto, that you and all your party [the Roman Church] may at length perceive that the only true bond of ecclesiastical unity consists in this, that Christ the Lord, who has reconciled us to God the Father, gather us out of our present dispersion into the fellowship of his body, that so, through his one Word and Spirit, we may join together with one heart and soul.[4]

The classical objection to Calvin's ecumenical theories and activity is his own separation from the Roman Church. In answer to this, it must be stressed that Calvin did follow his convictions. Wherever the Word was indeed purely preached in the Roman Catholic churches, then there was the sign of the Church; and with those congregations he saw himself united. But so often, in his view, the Word was not preached purely, nor the sacraments rightly administered within the Roman communion. Further, for him, separation from Rome was not schism. "Christian unity for him must be a unity of Christians, the visible unity of the 'true church,' not of a nominal church which has departed from the faith."[1]

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[1] John Calvin, letter to Farel, quoted by Kromminga, "Calvin and Ecumenicity," p. 161. See also Niesel, The Theology of Calvin, p. 196.

[2] ICR, IV.i.4; ii.5.

[3] Kromminga, "Calvin and Ecumenicity," p. 163.

[4] John Calvin, "Reply to Sadoleto," quoted by Kromminga, "Calvin and Ecumenicity," p. 153.

> . . . those who believe in Christ are not in danger of schism. They are convinced of the unity of the body of Christ into which they are incorporated. If they are compelled to secede, there is no break up of Church unity but a discrimination of the true and the false.[2]

Calvin's ecumenical activity frequently took the form of consolidation of Protestantism in its resistance to Rome.[3] There can hardly be any doubt that in Strasbourg, Calvin was introduced to the idea of a universal Protestantism, for the cause of which he labored so enthusiastically during the last years of his life. He worked hard on the Zurich Consensus of 1549, which did succeed in uniting French and German Swiss Protestantism.[4]

To Calvin, then, the Church is essentially one. All members of Christ are indivisibly connected with one another and with the Head.

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[1] McNeill, Unitive Protestantism, p. 179. "For it is enough for me that it behooved us to withdraw from them [the Roman Church] that we might come to Christ." (ICR, IV.ii.6).

[2] Niesel, The Theology of Calvin, p. 197. italics mine.

[3] Kromminga, "Calvin and Ecumenicity," p. 154. See also McNeill, Unitive Protestantism, p. 180.

[4] McNeill, Unitive Protestantism, pp. 183ff. Theodore Beza (1519-1605) inherited Calvin's intense desire for unity. Consult the whole section of McNeill's book: "Union Activities of Calvin and Beza," pp. 178-220.

Huldrich Zwingli (1484-1531)

The Church

The Church is the Una Sancta, the Bride of Christ. As such it includes only the Elect. By faith, the believer seizes upon his election and is sure of it. But it is necessary that this Church of Jesus Christ be visible. As visible Church, it is the whole community of those who, in one faith, are grounded upon and built up in the Lord Jesus Christ.[1] Thus the note of the Church, that by which it may be recognized, is the act of confessing the faith. Like Calvin, Zwingli asserts that which is strikingly the hallmark of twentieth century ecclesiology: "The Church is not where prelates are gathered but where people adhere to God's Word, where Christ is lived."[2] The Church is not only the invisible Bride, but the whole body of those who claim to be Christians, and also the particular local community. Fundamentally, the Church of God is event, and only secondarily a structured institution.[3]

Ministry

But the Church is also an institution, and the ministry, instituted by Christ, belongs to the very essence of this institution; ministry is not merely an adornment for the well-being of the Church. According to Zwingli, there are four ministries: apostle, prophet, evangelist, and pastor (doctor). The pastor is the watchman or overseer of his flock, but all ministries deal essentially not with administration, but with the preaching of the Word.[1]

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[1] Huldrich Zwingli, "Exposition of Sixty-seven Theses," article 8, quoted by Jacques Courvoisier, Zwingli, A Reformed Theologian (Richmond, Va.: John Knox Press, 1963), p. 52.

[2] Courvoisier, Zwingli, p. 53. See above, pp. 11-12.

[3] Ibid., p. 56.

The Sacraments

Zwingli's doctrine of the sacraments is most interesting. Quite different from either Calvin's or Luther's, it expresses a viewpoint held by some Presbyterian churches in the United States today.

The sacraments are signs or ceremonies by which men offer themselves before the Church as soldiers or disciples of Christ. The sacraments, therefore, assure the Church of a man's faith far more than they do the man himself.[2] Afflicted with a philosophy of spiritualism, Zwingli could not conceive that material things could in any way be the cause or instrument of grace. There could be no question of justification by means of water, or by bread and wine; there could be no _ex_ _opere_ _operato_. Baptism done by Jesus was the same as that of John: both can only point to a real baptism by the Holy Spirit.[3]

This sacramental view most importantly affects the Eucharist. Christ's body cannot possibly be in heaven and in the Eucharistic bread at the same time. Therefore, to "eat his body" means solely to "believe his Gospel." "The flesh is of no avail" became the scriptural justification for this theology.[1] In faith alone do we "eat the Body" of the Lord; the Body of Christ is present, therefore, for the man who puts his confidence in him. In eating this bread, we join ourselves together in one body, his own Body, which is the Church. In this way, therefore, the Lord's Supper is constitutive of the visible Church.[2] The Eucharist becomes a joyful remembrance and a public acknowledgement of all that Christ has done for us, it assures the assembled Church of our faith in Jesus Christ, and it makes us into the visible Church, his Body.

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[1] _Ibid_., p. 57. Cf. Eph. 4:11. [2] _Ibid_., p. 64.

[3] _Ibid_., p. 65. See McDonnell, _John_ _Calvin_, pp. 86-87.

Martin Bucer (1491-1551)

The Church

To the Reformer of Strasbourg, the Church is the Kingdom of God, the Kingdom of Heaven, the Holy City. As such, she is the community of the Elect in Christ. Only those who are saved, as in the doctrine of Luther, are in the Church.[3] But this Kingdom of Heaven is, as the Church, still a pilgrim here below. The Church is the Spouse of Christ, and his Body; He is the sole head of the Church.[4] By reason of her divine origin, the Church is universal and perpetual. Outside the Church, there is no salvation.[1]

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[1] For a good comment on this phrase, which has been a cause célèbre in sacramental theology, see Raymond E. Brown, The Anchor Bible, Vol. XXIX: The Gospel According to John (I-XII) (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1966), p. 299.

[2] Courvoisier, Zwingli, p. 75.

[3] Courvoisier, La notion d'Eglise chez Bucer dans son développement historique (Paris: Librairie Félix Alcan, 1933), p. 57.

[4] Ibid., p. 119.

The visible Church is the assembly and community of those who are gathered together in the whole world and united in Christ, by his Spirit and by his Word, in order that they may be one body and members of each other, each one having his function and his work to accomplish for the general building-up of the whole body and of all the members.[2]

The Church is placed firmly upon two columns, the Bible and predestination.[3] "The Church . . . has no power over Scripture but to recognize and explain it. She has no right to change it or to add thereto or to take out what she will."[4] The mission of the Church is to manifest by her effects the eternal decree of God, which chooses some and reprobates others.[5]

Ministry

Bucer, unlike Calvin, held firmly and emphasized strongly the universal priesthood of all believers. Nevertheless, there was a hierarchy of ministries, a classing into categories. The ministers of the Church have the functions of doctrine, exhortation, care of the poor, and government.[1]

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[1] _Ibid_., p. 121.

[2] Bucer, _Von der wahren Seelsorge und dem rechten Hirtendienst_ (Strasbourg, 1538), Ia, quoted in Courvoisier, _Eglise chez Bucer_, p. 118.

[3] His doctrine of the Bible is surprisingly modern: the Bible _contains_ the Word of God; the Bible is both human and divine, etc. See Courvoisier, _Eglise chez Bucer_, pp. 58-59.

[4] _Ibid_., p. 93.

[5] _Ibid_., p. 94.

> As service of the community surpasses the service of the individual, and as spiritual service is superior to material service, the highest function will be that of the apostle who, following Jesus Christ . . ., seeks to save sinners, and for this consents to become anathema for them.[2]

Bucer safeguards the direct exchange, without intermediary, between the soul and God; nevertheless, human ministry is necessary for _proclaiming_ salvation. Thus Bucer (and, as will be seen, Thurian) sees ministry in a two-fold light: the universal priesthood of the faithful, the ministry of the whole Church to the world, to sinners; and the ministry within the Church which is _for_ the Church. The function of ministry, either to the world or within the Church, is to proclaim pardon and salvation, so that the Christian can seize his election by faith, can accept his salvation already won.

> Thus, in order that man perceive truly the pardon of God, it is necessary that it be announced to him by the ministry of the Church, since God has instituted it to that effect; and the ministry of the Church has such an efficacy that sins are remitted to sinners "fully and in their entirety" when the Church remits them for them in the name and by the Word of the Lord.[3]

The Sacraments

The sacraments are signs, both audible and visible, by which God confers his invisible gifts; they are the most usual way in which God gives us his grace. The sacraments are for the salvation of some and for the condemnation of others.

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[1] Bucer, _Commentary on Romans_, pp. 540-42, quoted in Courvoisier, _Eglise chez Bucer_, p. 88.

[2] Bucer, _Das ym selbs niemant, sonder anderen leben soll. Und wie der mensch dahyn kummen mög_ (Strasbourg, 1523), quoted in Courvoisier, _Eglise chez Bucer_, p. 46.

[3] Courvoisier, _Eglise chez Bucer_, p. 90.

Baptism, the first of these signs, is a solemn introduction into the Kingdom of Heaven, that is, into the Church, pilgrim here below. It gives also the remission of sins and the Spirit of Christ by which we are dead and live again as sons and heirs of God and members of Christ.[1]

The Lord's Supper "expresses in the most concrete and most perfect manner that which is the Church."[2] The true presence of the Body and Blood of Christ are in the Supper. They are united, not in any natural way, with the bread and wine.[3] Bucer, therefore, agrees with Luther rather than with Zwingli on his sacramental doctrine. A further kinship to Luther may be seen in Bucer's admission of confession as a sacrament. In fact, although the power of the keys belongs to the whole Church, it is the ministers alone who exercise this power. Therefore, confession ought to be made only to a minister of the Church.[4] As has been seen, the ministers of the Church proclaim or announce to the sinner the pardon for his sins, a pardon already fully won by Jesus Christ.

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[1] Bucer, Metaphrases et ennarationes perpetuae epistolarum D. Pauli Apostoli: Tomus Primus, continens metaphrasim et ennarationem in Epistolam ad Romanos (1536), quoted in Courvoisier, Eglise chez Bucer, pp. 82-83.

[2] Courvoisier, Eglise chez Bucer, p. 56. See McDonnell, John Calvin, pp. 84-85.

[3] Courvoisier, Eglise chez Bucer, p. 85.

[4] Ibid., p. 90.

Karl Barth (1886-1968)

The Church

Christ is the source, criterion, comfort and hope, Lord, Head, and goal of the Church. And so he is in the thought of Karl Barth. But to Barth there is a much deeper, more complete relationship between Christ and the Church: the Church is wholly Christological; the very being of the Church is identical with the being of Jesus Christ.[1] Therefore, Christ and the Church which is his being have their eternal beginning in God's original and basic will and plan.

The Church in such a view is neither the invisible fellowship nor the visible community of all those who believe in Christ.[2] The Church is Christ. The visible community is a sign of the universal election of all men. This visible Church, this visible community, is an event: "If, then, the 'sin of man' be symbolized by a horizontal line, and the Word of God in Christ (and through the Scriptures) as a vertical one, the point at which they intersect represents the moment of justification. . . . According to Barth, this moment or event is constitutive of the Church. . . ."[3]

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[1] Herbert Hartwell, The Theology of Karl Barth: An Introduction (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1964), p. 142.

[2] Karl Barth, "The Church--The Living Congregation of the Living Lord Jesus Christ," in Man's Disorder and God's Design, Vol. I: The Universal Church in God's Design, The Amsterdam Assembly Series: World Council of Churches (New York: Harper and Brothers, Publishers, [1948]), p. 73.

[3] Maurice Bonaventure Schepers, O.P., "The Work of the Holy Spirit: Karl Barth on the Nature of the Church," Theological Studies, XXIII (December, 1962), p. 629. See Barth,

In Barth's words,

> In this final period the congregation is the event [*ereignis*] which consists in gathering together (congregatio) those men and women (fidelium) whom the living Lord Jesus Christ chooses and calls to be witnesses to the victory He has already won, and heralds of its future universal manifestation.[1]

This event of the Church, in the power of the Holy Spirit, must continually happen afresh in order that there may be the true Church of Jesus Christ.[2]

The Church lives in the form of a local congregation, confronted and controlled by Jesus Christ, the basis of all other forms of her life.[3] Thus this event does establish a human fellowship; in this sense there is continuity in the visible Church.[4] In this fellowship there is a concord of faith and creed, of love and its works, of hope and its confidence, made available for all mankind.[5]

Concretely, then, the Church is the local worshipping community, the earthly-historical form of existence of Jesus Christ himself, his body, created and continually renewed by the awakening power of the Holy Spirit.[6] It is this community

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Church Dogmatics, Vol. IV: *The Doctrine of Reconciliation*, ed. by G. W. Bromley and T. F. Torrance; trans. by G. W. Bromley (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1958), part 1, p. 643.

[1] Barth, "The Living Congregation," p. 68.

[2] Hartwell, *The Theology of Karl Barth*, p. 142.

[3] Barth, "The Living Congregation," p. 73.

[4] *Ibid*., p. 68; Schepers, "Karl Barth on the Church," p. 631.

[5] Barth, "The Living Congregation," p. 68.

[6] Schepers, "Karl Barth on the Church," p. 629.

which is touched by the Word of God. To be a Christian means, of necessity, to be a member of the Christian community; in other words, there is no legitimate private Christianity.[1] Thus the Church is not an institution, but a particular people set apart by God for a special purpose.[2] Rather, it is more accurate to say, in order to preserve the dynamic character of the Church, that it is the "calling together of God's people."[3]

The Church is a necessary instrument of salvation.[4] As such, it is the place and means of God's grace, and is placed between Jesus Christ and the pardoned sinner.[5]

> I believe the Church as the place where God is honored and where, therefore, divine honors are rejected. For these reasons and in this manner I believe the Church as a means of grace. I believe the Church as the divine foundation by virtue of which there shall not be a palace but rather a hovel of God among men until the end of the world. I believe the Church as the community of saints; that is, of sinners set apart and called by God, who, even as a *community* of saints, even as preachers and hearers of the divine Word, even as God's people--and particularly as that--wish to live by God's mercy (and do not consider this too little!) until the beginning of the realm of glory.[6]

One, Holy, Catholic, Apostolic

Barth, in the tradition of Christian theology, does see the Church as one, holy, catholic, and apostolic.

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[1] Hartwell, *The Theology of Karl Barth*, p. 146. See *Church Dogmatics*, IV, part 1, pp. 685ff.

[2] Hartwell, *The Theology of Karl Barth*, p. 145.

[3] Barth, "The Concept of the Church," in *Christianity Divided*, ed. by Daniel J. Callahan *et al*. (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1961), p. 156.

[4] *Ibid*., p. 158. [5] *Ibid*., pp. 163-64. [6] *Ibid*., p. 167.

That the Church is one is as certain as that there is only one God. The Body of Christ on earth can only be one.[1] It is clear that to Barth, unity is not a problem. Despite obvious divisions, "it is absurd to speak of several opposing churches."[2] Since there are, quite apparently, many opposing churches, it is to Barth's essential concept of the meaning and nature of the Church that we must look for his concept of unity. If the being of the Church is identical with the being of Jesus Christ, then in its being it is clearly one. His description of unity is therefore essential rather than phenomenological or inductive. Therefore, the Church, as she sets herself apart from other churches is not thereby one, for this setting-apart is only relative. She is set apart from every false Church by God, and in this manner she is one.[3] "She is the one Church insofar as it pleases God to make visible in her and through her what He as Lord of the Church can make visible. . . ."[4]

The Church is holy; that is, she is set apart as the place and instrument of divine revelation and atonement.[5] But her holiness does not consist in her constituting herself as a second Christian world in opposition to the world. She is more than the world because she has been constituted and continuously is constituted in the world. She cannot will to be holy; she can only believe that she is holy.[6]

According to Barth, both unity and holiness involve a

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[1] Ibid., p. 157. [2] Ibid. [3] Ibid., p. 165.

[4] Ibid. [5] Ibid., p. 158. [6] Ibid., pp. 165-66.

"setting apart." But the key is the one who sets apart: because and insofar as God sets her apart, the Church is one and holy; because and insofar as she sets herself apart, she detracts from her unity and holiness.

Catholicity is established, maintained, and preserved by the promised presence of Christ: "Where two or three among you are gathered together in my name, there am I in their midst."[1] Thus the Church is everywhere, in all places and times, because Christians gather in Christ's name at all places and times.

"To be apostolic, the Church must continually hear and accept afresh the apostolic witness as recorded in the Scripture."[2] Again we see the absolute primacy of the Word--constitutive of and judging the Church. From this concept of apostolicity comes the idea of the authority of the Church. For the Church "is grounded and must continually return to its ground in the testimony of the Apostles, which is normative both for the understanding and the preaching of divine revelation."[3]

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[1] Ibid., p. 166. (Mt. 18:20).

[2] Hartwell, The Theology of Karl Barth, p. 147.

[3] Barth, "The Concept of the Church," p. 159. It is remarkable how modern Roman Catholic ecclesiology is in essential agreement with Barth. No longer are the Catholic theologians concerned with simple historical continuity. "The real continuity and link with the apostles can be illustrated in two ways: the Church is apostolic, is a true follower of the apostles, when it preserves in all its members continuing agreement with the witness of the apostles, and also preserves a vital continuity with the ministry of the apostles. . . . Apostolicity, like unity, holiness and catholicity, is not a static attribute of the Church. Like them, it is an historical

The one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church cannot err in basic matters of faith; God's people as such cannot miss its goal, whatever may be said of individuals and particulars.[1]

Sacraments and Ministry

Barth accepts the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper. Both are powerful within the event which is the Church; both enable men to live. Baptism incorporates a man into a special relationship to Jesus Christ; the Supper keeps men in this state of "belonging to him," and enables them to fulfill thereby their mission to others: to be witnesses to Christ.[2]

There is no distinction, to Barth, between clergy and laity; ministry is diakonia, service, and all can and should serve.[3] There are no higher or lower forms of ministry. Barth prefers the congregationalist system, which presumes the autonomy of each congregation. However, he admits the usefulness of a synod for solidarity and ecumenicity.[4]

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dimension, a dimension which has constantly to be fulfilled anew in history." (Hans Küng, The Church [New York: Sheed and Ward, 1967], pp. 356, 358. Cf. Küng's entire section on this topic: pp. 354-59; also Lumen Gentium, 20-29). For Calvin's ideas on apostolic succession, see also McDonnell, John Calvin, p. 150.

[1] Barth, "The Concept of the Church," pp. 158-59.

[2] Barth, "The Living Congregation," p. 69; Hartwell, The Theology of Karl Barth, p. 147.

[3] Hartwell, The Theology of Karl Barth, p. 145.

[4] Barth, "The Living Congregation," pp. 73-76.

Taizé

Introduction

Unlike Calvin, Zwingli, Bucer, and Barth, the Community of Taizé and its prior, Roger Schütz, cannot, certainly, be said to affect or form the totality of Protestant thought. Manifestly, Taizé can be an enriching influence, "leaven in the lump," in a phrase often used by Schütz, but as yet this enriching influence is peripheral. It is a growing and ever more important influence, perhaps largely because it is not only a product of these times and of modern religious and spiritual ideas, but is really a quintessence of these times and ideas.

Its influence on Protestantism at large notwithstanding, it undoubtedly is a major factor in the theology of Max Thurian. It is to Taizé and to Roger Schütz, then, that we turn our attention.

The Community of Taizé was founded in August, 1940, at the village of Taizé, in Burgundy, not too far from Lyons, and situated between the ancient monastic centers of Cluny and Citeaux. For two years, the young Swiss pastor Roger Schütz lived alone in a large old manor house, caring for the poor and especially for the refugees from occupied France. Driven out in 1942, he returned in 1944, this time with three companions, and the Community of Taizé had really begun.[1]

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[1] Columkille F. O'Shea, "The Community of Taizé," _At-One-Ment_, IV (1962), p. 146; J. Mignon and Robert Giscard, eds., "Taizé, Communauté et Unité," album presenté par _Fêtes et Saisons_ (Paris: Editions du Cerf, 1965), pp. 4-5. These companions were Max Thurian, Daniel de Montmollin, and Pierre Souverain.

Superficially resembling a Catholic monastic community, Taizé is, at its heart, a thorough disciple of the Reform.[1] Max Thurian, and above all Roger Schütz, have formed the spirit, the faith and the worship of the community. But the influence is mutually active: these men are also formed by the community. "A brother-theologian is personally responsible for his own research; he is, however, illumined by the life, the faith, and the liturgy of the Community."[2] An examination of ecclesiology in spirit and in action in the Community of Taizé will heighten understanding and appreciation of Thurian's thought; it will cast light upon the roots of his theology as well as its fruits.

The Unity of the Body of Christ

The greatest strength of Taizé is that their belief is lived. The unity and interdependence of belief and action, of life-way and life-work, has drawn into focus a vital theology of witness and love.

The passion of Taizé is for the unity of the Body of Christ: this is the dominant note of the community's vocation.[3] The brothers are witnesses, in a torn and individualistic world, to a mutual Christian and human unity.[1]

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[1] Remarks such as O'Meara's: "It [Taizé] is a world which has more in common with Monte Casino than with Geneva" show an acquaintance only with the external life of the community. (Thomas O'Meara, "The Rule of Taizé," Review for Religious, XXII [May, 1963], p. 326).

[2] Paupert, Taizé et l'Eglise, p. 205.

[3] Frank van het Hof, "To be Men of Reconciliation: The Testimony of a Monastic Setting: The Community of Taizé," Lumen Vitae, XIX (December, 1964), p. 649.

> From the beginning the Community of Taizé has wanted to labour through prayer and in common pursuit for a reconciliation between Christians and between all men.[2]

> For the Community and the individual brothers of Taizé, Christian unity is no mere object of theological study and speculation; nor is the quest for it but one activity among others, though one to which they feel particularly attached. No, Christian unity, we must go so far as to say, is their very life.[3]

How do the brothers of Taizé live ecumenism? The first and indispensible step is "to be a sign of brotherly love in the Church and in the world, a sign of unity fully lived, a sign of love and loyalty one to anot~~her~~ achieved in daily life."[4] For brotherly love is possible in spite of our divisions. The world expects Christians to live dangerously today as committed men and women; it expects Christians to render by their lives an authentic content to the faith, hope, and charity professed by their lips.[5]

But Taizé has seen that the unity intended by Christ is no longer primarily a gift already made, or a static uniformity, but rather a dynamic communion to be realized.[6] So at Taizé there is a fundamental concept of "running to meet the Lord."[1]

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[1] John Heijke, An Ecumenical Light on the Renewal of Religious Community Life: Taizé, Duquesne Studies, Theological Series, Vol. VII (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1967), p. 99.

[2] van het Hof, "Men of Reconciliation," p. 649.

[3] François Biot, The Rise of Protestant Monasticism, trans. by W. J. Kerrigan (Baltimore: Helicon Press, 1964), p. 121.

[4] van het Hof, "Men of Reconciliation," p. 650.

[5] Ibid., p. 648.

[6] Heijke, Ecumenical Light, p. 121.

> The Community [of Taizé] wishes to guard against becoming a set and stereotyped image of the Christian community, but rather to remain a place where man is called to go forward boldly and demandingly in order to tell his fellow men, through the concrete act of his life, of his expectancy of the event of God, and to assure them of the certainty of a presence, that of the Risen One.[2]

Thus the life of the community expresses its theological ministry. Although the theological background is as diverse as the members of the community, there is a common teaching manifested: the virtues of peace and simplicity, of openness to others, of charity and longing for unity among all Christians.[3]

Out of this living of belief have arisen deep theological insights on the nature of the Church and on the unity of Christians. New thought has been directed toward the importance of tradition and continuity.[4]

> . . . the surpassing of the artificial opposition between Scripture and Tradition is acquired, above all, in

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[1] Malcolm Boyd, "The Taizé Community," Theology Today, XV (January, 1959), p. 493.

[2] Gerard [Huni], "Taizé, 1966," One in Christ, III, No. 2 (1967), p. 194. "Taizé does not claim to be a better form of community than any other, but it is one form of community in Christ that has been given a vocation, a place in space and an hour in time for its distinctive witness. As to the future, that is in the hands of God." (Harold E. Fey, "Taizé: Community amidst Chaos," The Christian Century, July 3, 1968, p. 866.

[3] A. Poulin, Jr., "The Protestant Monks," Today, XXI (October, 1965), p. 28.

[4] Biot, "La renaissance de communautés 'cénobitiques' dans le protestantisme contemporain," Istina, III (1956), p. 303.

> the theology of Taizé by a total openness to the Church; community life and liturgy furnish an ecclesial dimension to the theological thought of the brothers, a care for a communal interpretation. Now, the Church is a community, and the community, writes brother Roger, "constitutes a microcosm of the Church." Nourished by the prayer of the Church, which is the liturgy, the theology of Taizé is open because it is open to the universal Church, through the sign of community. For Taizé, in the last analysis, theology is only liturgical, that is to say, ecclesial.[1]

The living of and importance of the totality of Christian life as the primary mark of evangelism and witness has opened up a new role for the Church: to push out the members of the Church into a non-Christian environment so that they may live in solidarity, love and esteem with those who do not know or comprehend the Gospel.[2]

One practical way in which this work of unity is furthered is by means of the "Cormatin encounters," small study groups from all faiths meeting at Cormatin, a village near Taizé. The stated aims of these encounters summarize very well the whole mission of Taizé:

> To implant a spirit of openness; to arouse a thirst for clear knowledge of the reality of human societies; to feed stirred-up curiosity with objective information while ceaselessly overcoming prejudices; to train men who would apply themselves to these problems of our time and enter into the large current of contemporary sociology. . . .[3]

A Sign of Disunity

Paradoxically, the Community of Taizé stands also as a witness to the disunity of Christians. That Christians of enormously different backgrounds and creeds gather at Taizé manifests indeed the power of this really common prayer--visibly common--subject to sudden discovery by many of those who are participants more or less engaged, of the mystery of both the division and the unity of Christians.[1] Thus, both the dividedness of Christians and their praying together are made permanently present at Taizé.[2]

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[1] Paupert, Taizé et l'Eglise, p. 207.

[2] Boyd, "The Taizé Community," p. 500.

[3] van het Hof, "Men of Reconciliation," p. 219.

> It is profoundly significant that the Eucharist, which is one real sign of unity in the Church, is the only function of all those in the Eglise de la Réconciliation celebrated separately by Catholics and Protestants. Nor can it be otherwise. Until true and final unity is attained, the liturgical separation will persist as the significant and painful reminder of the estrangement. On this crucial point there is clear thinking. Taizé would have it no other way; the ecumenical movement, to produce real and lasting effects, demands both charity and clarity.[3]

These thoughts on Taizé may seem scattered, desultory. Let it be emphasized again that Taizé is a lived theology of the Church. For a theological concretization of this dynamic experience, we must examine the writings of Roger Schütz.

Roger Schütz (b. 1915)

As a youth, Roger Schütz was sent to study in a village neighboring his own. His parents decided to board him with a poor family in order that this widow with many children might be helped by Roger's board money. The family was Catholic. Thus his formative years were spent between two families: the one Catholic, that of his studies, the other Protestant, his own. Schütz himself has commented, "It is to my parents' generosity that I owe my ecumenical vocation."[1] It was this experience of his youth that showed him the pain and absurdity of separation, and in his youth that he promised to live a vocation for unity.[2]

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[1] Robert Giscard, "Les conditions du dialogue oecuménique," Etudes théologiques et religieuses, XXXIX, Nos. 1-2 (1964), p. 84.

[2] Heijke, Ecumenical Light, p. 137.

[3] Damian McElrath, "Ecumenical Experiment at Taizé," Cord, XVI (January, 1966), p. 25.

The Church: A Community United

Unity is unquestionably the central theme of Schütz' writings. His theology, his ecclesiology, even the masterful Rule of Taizé, must be examined within this context; his thought consistently flows to, from, or around this one central fount.

The unity of the Church, according to Schütz, is absolutely necessary. It is the will of Christ; it must be hoped for at any price.[3] This unity willed by Christ is not some sort of spiritual unity only, but one single visible Church.[4] Christians, and above all those who are not Christians, are less and less willing to accept the contradiction of Christians divided into different creeds.[1]

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[1] Mignon and Giscard, "Taizé: Communauté et Unité," p. 4.

[2] Charles Boyer, "Taizé, A Center of Ecumenism," Unitas, XIII (Winter, 1961), p. 240.

[3] Roger Schütz, Living Today for God, trans. by Stephen McNierney and Louis Evrard (Baltimore: Helicon Press, 1962), p. 124.

[4] Schütz, Unity, Man's Tomorrow (London: The Faith Press, 1962), p. 71.

> Certain Christians, it is true, claim that the unity of the Church already exists invisibly in Christ. But what is this spiritual unity which is incapable of impressing itself upon the facts? Above all, how can we ask that those whom the Gospels call the world, the unbelievers, should see things with the eyes of faith? The world believes in what it sees, and what it sees is a divided Christianity. Only our visible union could prove to the world that we are the sons of the same Father, faithful to the same Christ.[2]

Thus we can never encounter those who do not believe, except if we are united.[3]

A visible unity, a united Church, does not mean some sort of federation of churches. "A federalist structure, often a very happy solution in human societies, has nothing whatever to do with the profound unity of the mystical Body of Christ."[4]

> To be ONE so that the world may believe! There are two steps here: the first--for us Christians to reunite, the second--for us to unite so that we can bring God to those who do not believe. It is this second step which is going to occupy our interest. It aims at making Christ present throughout the whole world, to men of all races and languages. At the same time, it gives us back our first vocation--a vocation which is universal, ecumenical and catholic and given to every Christian in his baptism. Because of our division this vocation is often extinguished, or at least asleep, but wherever it shows itself it becomes a powerful means of reawakening Christians all over the world.[5]

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[1] Schütz, Living Today for God, p. 71.

[2] Ibid., p. 74.

[3] Schütz, The Power of the Provisional, trans. by Philip Parsons and Timothy Wilson (Philadelphia: Pilgrim Press, 1969), p. 25.

[4] Schütz, Living Today for God, p. 77.

[5] Schütz, Unity, Man's Tomorrow, p. 18.

What are the means of unity? In order to dare to call all the baptized to visible unity, we must first begin with ourselves. Daily, unity must be realized in each Christian and among Christians living and believing together.[1] Secondly, each must listen carefully to the faith which completes his own, since it also contributes to the harmony of the great choir of the communion of saints.[2] Once this "dialogue of approach" is accomplished,

> Christian unity can only be achieved by an act of faith consisting in the visible manifestations of our solidarity, bringing us all together at the heart of the same ecclesial reality. Those who, though still separated, live in the expectation of unity, know that their situation is only provisional. This is what keeps them going. For those who are still in expectation, the price of Christian unity is this: to be always willing to go beyond one's present position towards the fullest realisation of ecumenism.[3]

Nothing is to be gained in the dialogue by denying the true causes of division, by refusing to define the points of disagreement.[4] On the other hand, while not minimizing the importance of different doctrinal positions, it cannot be stressed enough that if these real problems were the only thing dividing us we would be nearer than we suppose.[5]

Nor should the Catholic or the Protestant or any Christian speak of the "return" of separated brothers to the true flock. Such a conception is far from the mentality of today's man. "The unity of Christians will not involve the triumph of one group over another. No one would accept a unity which involved the victory of some and the defeat of others."[1]

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[1] Schütz, Unanimity in Pluralism, trans. by David Flood, Brother Pascal, and Brother Thomas (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1967), p. 12.

[2] Schütz, Living Today for God, pp. 82-83.

[3] Schütz, The Power of the Provisional, p. 59.

[4] Schütz, Living Today for God, p. 75.

[5] Schütz, Unity, Man's Tomorrow, p. 81.

It is the genius of Schütz that he and the brothers of Taizé accept the dictum: "One does not argue about unity--one lives it."[2] The Rule says, "Never resign yourself to the scandal of the separation of Christians, all of whom so easily profess love for their neighbor, yet remain divided. Be consumed with burning zeal for the unity of the Body of Christ."[3] And in the simplest possible statement, this zeal is given flesh: "Be a sign of joy and of brotherly love among men."[4] Schütz explains:

> In establishing at Taizé a common life at the heart of Protestantism, we have no other intention than to bring together men who wish to commit themselves to follow in the footsteps of Christ, in order to be a living sign of the Church's unity.
>
> Community life brings into being a *microcosm of the Church*; on a small scale it gives an image of the whole reality of the Church.[5]

All, then, that has been said of the community, all that the Community of Taizé lives: *this* is the Church.

The brothers of the Community of Taizé devote themselves to realizing the parable of community: to being the sign of brotherly love within the Church.[1] Therefore, the unique work of each individual brother is to build up the whole, to participate day by day in the re-creation of the entire body. "If one member is dominated by an individual impulse to create and accomplishes his work without integrating it into the common creation, he unknowingly destroys."[2]

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[1] Schütz, *The Power of the Provisional*, p. 56.

[2] Schütz, *Unity, Man's Tomorrow*, p. 72.

[3] *The Rule of Taizé* (mimeographed).

[4] *Ibid*.

[5] Schütz, *The Power of the Provisional*, p. 60. italics mine. See also *Unanimity in Pluralism*, p. 9.

Once solidly bound, in and through the community, to the mystery of the Church, a man is capable of going out to the encounter with all men.[3] There are three truly ecumenical gestures which are capable of giving to ecumenism a totally new dimension: to strive to avoid the rupture (in this age all too apparent) between generations; to encounter those who cannot believe; and to reunite the world of the poor.[4] Thus unity and mission are forever linked.[5]

Unity does not mean uniformity. Uniformity merely creates the appearance of ~~unity; it~~ weaves a superficial garment, and the Gospel is then worn on the surface. But unanimity, on the other hand, demands an inner harmony; it supposes pluralism in personal expressions.[6] By the same token, the diversity of spiritual families in the Church is a factor of health and unity.[1] "Yet to be inclined to pluralism for its own sake, and to remain without a central point of reference, without a column of the Church, without unanimity in what is fundamental, would mean to accept sooner or later the death of the faith on earth."[2]

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[1] The Rule of Taizé (from the Exhortation read at Profession).

[2] Schütz, The Power of the Provisional, p. 22.

[3] Ibid., pp. 94-95. [4] Ibid., p. 20.

[5] Schütz, Living Today for God, p. 72.

[6] Schütz, Unanimity in Pluralism, p. 14.

The Sacraments

The sacrament of the Eucharist is at once both the means and the final end of unity. It alone is capable of giving us the supernatural strength and power of accomplishing on earth our unity among the baptized.[3] There is no hope of unity without this common encounter with the Resurrected Christ in the Eucharist. "We may overlook the fact that meeting is expressed through a plurality of liturgical forms. What matters is the fundamental certainty of the real presence of Christ."[4] The day must soon come when those are united around the same Table who, although separated confessionally, bleieve in the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist.[5]

The Rule re-states this belief:

And since at the feet of the Lord we have a right to

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[1] Schütz, The Power of the Provisional, p. 43.

[2] Schütz, Unanimity in Pluralism, p. ix.

[3] Schütz, The Power of the Provisional, p. 59.

[4] Schütz, Unanimity in Pluralism, p. 51. It would seem, therefore, that to Schütz the presence of Christ in the Eucharist is the means and the end of unity. Liturgical and even other confessional differences are of minor or no importance.

[5] Schütz, The Power of the Provisional, p. 60.

> the good part, let us surrender ourselves to the living Word of God, let it reach the deepest recesses of our being to take possession not only of our spirit, but also of our body. Christ, the Word made flesh, gives himself to us visibly in the Sacrament. Therefore nourish yourself with the meal of thanksgiving, the Holy Communion, and do not forget that it is offered to the sick of the People of God. It is there for you who are always weak and infirm.[1]

In prayer life, as at the Eucharist, unity is supreme:

> When at prayer we should also remain conscious of the full dimensions of the Church, placing ourselves within the communion of saints.[2]

> The intensification of our prayer life, not so much in its length but rather in its quality, gives greater authenticity to the sign of a community awaiting together in expectation of Christ.[3]

Ministry

The mission of unity extends also to authority in the Church; for the function of authority is to sustain unity.

> He who has received a function of authority is first of all a servant. If he knows this, he is on his guard against the temptation of paternalism. His service is to stimulate the community--this microcosm of the Church entrusted to him--to strain towards unanimity, to have but one mind, "una anima." If the Church is an institution, it is first of all a fraternal community.[4]

It is interesting to note that Schütz sees the need for a pastor of the pastors, to sustain unanimity, to regroup that which is always breaking up. Thus the main theme of unity also creates the need for the bishop.[5]

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[1] The Rule of Taizé.

[2] Schütz, Living Today for God, p. 81.

[3] Schütz, Unanimity in Pluralism, p. 38.

[4] Ibid., p. 63; The Power of the Provisional, p. 45.

[5] Schütz, The Power of the Provisional, p. 45. Although

Marriage and celibacy in the Church are also signs of unity. Schütz and Thurian have exactly the same theology and viewpoint on these realities.[1]

A Theology of Hope: The Dynamic of the Provisional

The theology of Roger Schütz is ultimately a theology of hope; it is in this that one of his most original and worthwhile contributions lies. For visible unity will cause Taizé to disappear, and the Community of Taizé looks with hope and joy to its own disappearance!

> What is peculiar to us at Taizé may perhaps one day have to disappear. Our liturgy leads us to a unanimity in faith and supports a strong hope. It makes us live, as on the evening of Emmaus, in the presence of the Risen One whom our eyes are kept from seeing. And yet, is not this a provisional state, which is destined to disappear on the day of visible unity?
>
> The man who lives in the provisional sees his journey towards unity given a new impulse. The supreme threat sould be for us to become self-sufficient, to close the lid on the newly discovered treasure and then to institute, for centuries to come, structures which, once outmoded, become factors of isolation and not of communication.[2]

> The most beautiful thing about Taizé is that the Community knows that it will die; it will die with the name of Taizé and it will rise again with the name of One Church,

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he does not call this "pastor of the pastors" a bishop, he probably means this. Thurian is, of course, quite explicit and detailed on the role of the episcopacy (see below, pp. 217-222. There are two other possibilities: perhaps a "superintendent" modeled after the customs of the Continental Reformed Church (and some American churches of the Reformed tradition) is meant; it is even conceivable that Schütz refers to a pope. Paupert assumes this latter position: see Paupert, Taizé et l'Eglise, p. 222.

[1] Schütz, Unanimity in Pluralism, p. 66. See below,

[2] Schütz, The Power of the Provisional, p. 67.

> perfect in Christ. It strives each day to cause that in it which is not Christ to disappear, and to increase in itself, and in all the churches, Christ dead, resurrected, glorified. This is the ecumenism of Taizé.[1]

Summary

It is not possible to summarize the thoughts of the Reformers and of Taizé on the Church, on ministry, sacraments, and unity as if one could reach a composite conclusion or compound definition of any of these realities. It would be the same impossible task (unfortunately many times attempted) of drawing a composite picture of Jesus Christ from the four Gospels. We must, in short, realize that each of the Reformers in this chapter has his own theology. It is common insofar as it rests upon the Word of God and upon the milieu which produced it; it is diverse insofar as it is touched and formed by the genius of the one man or movement.

It is possible, however, to draw out certain common currents, to show areas of agreement or disagreement, and to make remarks of a general nature.

The Church

According to the Reformers of the sixteenth century, the invisible Church, which will also be the "final Church," the Church of the End-time, is the total number of the Elect. Karl Barth is much broader in his vision, seeing the invisible Church as identical to the being of Christ himself. Thus, clearly, the boundaries of the activity and effectiveness of the Holy Spirit do not coincide with those of the visible Church.[1] The invisible Church, however, is comprised only of the Elect (Calvin, Zwingli, Bucer). It must be noted, of course, that the doctrine of election was far from uniform among the Reformers. Calvin, for example, held the now well-known doctrine of double predestination. God is the ultimate ground of this election; those who are damned give glory to God's justice; while Luther's emphasis was rather in the certainty of salvation: for Luther, the promise of grace is universal. The double decree is not at home in his theology.[2]

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[1] Paupert, _Taizé_ _et_ _l'Eglise_, p. 194.

Reformed thought of the twentieth century tends to erase boundaries, to see that the invisible Church extends to all men. Even modern thought, however, is not in any sense monolithic; the question of universalism is very much a live issue.[3]

The visible Church has been variously described: it is the Remnant (Calvin); a fellowship of the people of God, those who confess the one faith and are united in Christ, a fellowship where Christ is lived, and as such, a sign of the invisible election of all men (Calvin, Bucer, Zwingli, Barth, Taizé). The Church is Event more than it is institution (Zwingli, Barth).

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[1] Joseph Ratzinger, "The Ministerial Office and the Unity of the Church," Journal of Ecumenical Studies, I (1964), p. 57.

[2] J. K. S. Reid, "The Office of Christ in Predestination," Scottish Journal of Theology, II (1948), pp. 10-17; 167-68.

[3] For example, see Reid's own theories, Ibid., pp. 182-83. Universalism (the ultimate salvation of all men, so that God's love triumphs) is favored, among others, by J. A. T. Robinson, Berdyaev, Temple, Baillie, C. H. Dodd; it is opposed by Brunner and T. F. Torrance. See J. A. T. Robinson, "Universalism--Is It Heretical?" Scottish Journal of Theology, II (1949), pp. 139-155; Robinson, "Universalism--A Reply," Scottish Journal of Theology, II (1949), pp. 378-80; T. F. Torrance, "Universalism or Election?" Scottish Journal of Theology, II (1949), pp. 310-18.

Is the Church the Body of Christ? To Calvin, it is becoming the Body of Christ; to Bucer and Barth it is the Body of Christ. This constitutes a major area of confusion, if not disagreement. Purcell has hit upon this confusion rather well:

> Consequently, the Protestant movement can accept no one "ecclesiastical form" as comprising the Pleroma Christi, but only can admit that all such forms are but partial apprehensions of the Pleroma Christi. Protestantism by its very nature demands a continual engendering of new partial apprehensions of the Una Sancta through renewed appraisals of the Gospel. . . . In the light of the Protestant Principle, Protestantism has been forced to deny that any one visible church is the Pleroma Christi. . . . Consequently Protestantism must deny that any visible church is the Mystical Body of Christ--the historical perpetuation of the Incarnation.[1]

The Word

It is well known from Reformation theology that the Word is a "mark" of the Church, and this can be seen clearly in the work of Calvin, Zwingli, and Bucer (and of course Luther). All of the Reformers, both ancient and modern, stress the absolute primacy of the Word. The Church has no power over the Word; rather, the Word judges the Church.

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[1] Dismas F. Purcell, "The Traditional Protestant Ecclesiologies," At-One-Ment, IV (1962), pp. 66-68. Purcell, evidently, speaks from a quite different philosophical background and viewpoint. I do not think that he really understands the Protestant ecclesiologies; moreover, his tone is unfortunately polemical. However, perhaps by chance, but more likely because of the really apparent confusion in Church-identity and in the visible vs. invisible controversy, he has hit upon the heart of the matter.

> [In the Reformation] not the Office but the "correctness," the authenticity, of the Gospel became the criterion for the presence of the Church. A certain hypostatization of the Word took place at that point; the Word became independent in relation to the Church, and consequently it came to be understood as possessing an importance in its own right. It loomed as the existing critical measure of the Church.[1]

The ministry (office) in the Church, therefore, exists primarily to serve the Word, to proclaim the Word. Even the sacraments exist, according to Calvin, to seal the Word; the Word must accompany the sacrament.

> In all of this one fact remains clear--that the New Testament Office is first determined by the Word: it is a service responsible to the Word. The fact that this Word found its genuine resting place in the Eucharistic celebration soon allowed the service of the Word and the service of the Table to become integrated, one with another. . . . One thing more should be added. Office is the service of the general, the common priesthood, and in that framework, a service of order--but also, a service to freedom of the spirit.[2]

The Sacraments

All the Reformers, ancient and modern, admit the two sacraments of baptism and the Eucharist. On baptism there is general agreement, a theology based rather simply and directly on the obvious New Testament doctrine of this sacrament. The right administration of these sacraments forms, along with the pure preaching of the Word, a mark of the true Church (Calvin, Bucer [and Luther]).

The Eucharist is the means and the end of the unity of the Church, for it creates and constitutes the Church and makes it into the one Body of Christ; in Bucer's happily chosen phrase, the Eucharist "expresses" the Church. On this there is common agreement.

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[1] Ratzinger, "Office and Unity," p. 43.

[2] Ibid., p. 50.

Ministry

Ministry in the Church is at the service of the Word and exists to serve the people of the Church. It is necessary to the Church, and even goes to make up its being. Modern Reformed theologians see ministry as ordered to unity (Schütz), and as witness to unity, forming a continuity in the Church.[1]

> The most normal sign of the continuity of the Church is the sacred ministry, instituted by God as the ordinary agent of the history of salvation. This ministry accompanies the Church through its history as an element which goes to make up its *being*. Those who are called to assume it are charged to proclaim the Gospel, to administer the sacraments and to govern the Church.[2]

The diverse orders and functions of the ministry are always those drawn from the New Testament documents, such as Ephesians, Timothy, etc. Because of this New Testament witness, and as a result of the development which had taken place in the Church, the Reformed Church and its theologians (even Calvin, as has been seen) are deeply interested in the office of bishop. That the Reformed Church on the Continent does not have bishops, called so by name, does not imply disapproval or disavowal. "In renouncing the traditional Episcopate in the sociological sense one does not renounce this Episcopate in the theological sense. . . ."[1]

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[1] *Ibid.*, p. 56.

[2] J. J. von Allmen, "The Continuity of the Church according to Reformed Teaching," *Journal of Ecumenical Studies*, I (1964), p. 436.

The Dimension of Unity

To the Reformers' concept of the Church, of the sacraments, of the ministry, there is the dimension of unity. For Calvin, visible unity is necessary to the Church of God. But this unity has never meant uniformity, but rather a unanimity in creed, love, and hope, with a pluralism of forms and expressions, even of doctrine.

It is with the concept of unity that, as would be expected, the modern theologians are intensely involved. Max Thurian is both product and formateur of a community where unity is lived, where the ardent desire for unity, the witness to unity through brotherly love, openness and dialogue is a central vocation. The unity conceived by Schütz and Taizé is a dynamic unity, not a thing given, but to be realized. If the community of Taizé is a microcosm of the Church, then the Church ought to be one day what Taizé is: a loving fellowship of men who create unity, who day by day strive to surpass what was in the past and what now is, and to strain forward to a unity of the future--Christians who are "running to meet Christ."

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[1] *Ibid.*, p. 440. Barth's doctrine of the ministry, as has been shown, is quite different from this (see above, p. 31).

CHAPTER III

THE MYSTERY AND LIFE OF THE CHURCH

Introduction

What is the Church? It is a direct question, but we cannot find in the thought of Max Thurian a direct and categorical answer. Like the Church herself, this central idea is impossible to categorize neatly, or to be wholly contained in human words. On the contrary, his answer is very diverse, complex, rich. He presents not one but many approaches to the understanding of the meaning of the Church, not one but many facets of her nature. Rather than definitions of the Church, it is proper to speak of appreciations of the Church: a greatly diversified objectification of what Thurian knows of the Church, both as a theologian and as a believer. For him, the reality of the Church and its expressions form a coat of many colors.

The labyrinthine richness of his thought on this matter evades any one organized plan of presentation. Therefore, the division and treatment of subject matter in this chapter is based on one decision of many possible plans. There are surely other, and there may be better ways to approach the problem.

We shall begin with a thorough investigation of the mystery of the Church, examining this mystery through many channels; the problems of the Church and the churches, the Church visible and invisible, and the relationship of the Church to the Kingdom will be integrated with this exposition; types of the Church and the foundation and life of the Church conclude the chapter.

The Church: The Community of the Baptized

"The church is the universal and local community of persons attached to Christ by faith and baptism, and who desire to persevere in a life nurtured by the word of God and the sacraments. . . ."[1] The Church, then, first of all, is a community: men born into union with other men through baptism and the Spirit, assembled by the Word of God, nourished and sustained as a living organism by faith, the Word, and the sacraments--above all the Eucharist.

One of the signs of the living Church in this century is the rediscovery of Christian community and its significance for Christianity.[2] This is the age of an ingrained individualism striving to realize this sense of community. The Church must take note of this; she must not forget that she is the community par excellence.[3] Thus, the Church is not solely an institution or an organism, but a real brotherhood, united by a common bond, animated by the love of Christ.[1] Mankind must give response to God as a people. The Church is the people of God, the continuity of Israel, marching in this world on the way to the Kingdom, the yet-unreached consummation.[2] More and more, Christians ought to comprehend their solidarity and their common engagement in this community.

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[1] Max Thurian, Love and Truth Meet, trans. by C. Edward Hopkin (Philadelphia: Pilgrim Press, 1968), p. 62. [translation of Amour et vérité se rencontrent] Hereinafter referred to as LTM.

[2] Biot, Protestant Monasticism, pp. 111-13.

[3] Thurian, "La communauté de Cluny," Verbum Caro, II (1948), p. 109. Verbum Caro is hereinafter referred to as VC.

Yet, this community of Christians "does not imply a uniformity of structures, nor, further, a uniformity of organization or government; there is a living variety which is the token that the Holy Spirit quickens and enriches the Church."[3]

The Church and the Churches: Unanimity in Pluralism

The ecclesial reality, the Church, finds visible expression in authentic, but varied communities; "the universal Church is the community of communities."[4]

It is evident that Thurian sees in the New Testament the mystery of the Church, the Body of Christ, the communion of all those baptized in Christ. But this Church is not an entity; it does not exist concretely as "the Church." Rather, the Body of Christ is manifested in local churches.[1] The local church is constituted by the celebration of the Eucharist. It is a community of Christians grouped round the Word of God and the sacraments, in faith in Christ present through his Holy Spirit.[2]

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[1] Thurian, "L'unité visible," VC, XVI (1962), p. 153.

[2] "Vatican II and Ecumenical Dialogue," An interview with Max Thurian, Way: Catholic Viewpoints (U.S.), XX, No. 3 (April, 1964), p. 26. See also LTM, p. 62. In commenting on the Dogmatic Constitution Lumen Gentium, Thurian remarked, "The second chapter, which was not expected in the project, and came suddenly, as the gift of God, is wonderful. I like it very much, because to see the Church as the people of God with this unity, the unity of the baptized, is very important." (Interview with Max Thurian, at Taizé, December 27, 1966).

[3] Thurian, "L'unité visible," VC, XVI (1962), p. 153.

[4] Gerard [Huni], "Taizé, 1966," p. 193. See also Heijke, Ecumenical Light, pp. 31-32.

Unfortunately, incorrect interpretations of the Roman Catholic idea of visible institution have seemed to demand uniformity in the Church. Thurian claims that the churches, the concrete worshipping communities, must find their unity in faith, in sacraments, and in discipline: a unanimity in pluralism of existences and manifestations.[3] As a pluralism, the churches render a great service to faith; they are the concrete expression of the fact that not all sides of the Gospel are to be seen except in a larger community--the Body of Christ.[4] Thus, there is not one great universal visible Church, and parts of this big Church called "churches."

Some Further Conclusions

This view of the Church and the churches has important meaning for the ministry:

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[1] Interview with Max Thurian, at Taizé, December 28, 1966.

[2] Hébert Roux, "Dialogue with Roman Catholicism from within French Protestantism," Lumen Vitae, XIX (1964), p. 430.

[3] Interview with Max Thurian, at Taizé, December 28, 1966. See also LTM, p. 65.

[4] Biot, Protestant Monasticism, p. 127.

> The bishop within the Presbyterium, according to the letters of Saint Ignatius, is rather the pastor of a local city church, surrounded by several elders (presbyters) forming a college, and by several deacons. But both the one and the other are properly speaking ministers of Christ, in the service of the people of God assembled in community in the local church.[1]

But this pastor is not solely the servant of a particular church; he is consecrated and ordained for the one, holy, universal, and apostolic Church. "Even if, as a result of division, his ministry is not able to be accepted everywhere, the particular church which consecrates and ordains a pastor does not do it for itself alone, but for the service of the whole Body of Christ."[2]

This unanimity in pluralism gives a richness to the faith of the Church. It is not a limited faith; it is able to express itself today in the confession of faith of one or another particular church, but it is able to enlarge itself tomorrow to more ecumenical dimensions.[3] Thus there is not only diversity, but hope. The unity of all churches is well-served by this conception. On the Roman Catholic side of the question, the recent conception of the Second Vatican Council, with its emphasis on the local churches and their bishops, and the unity of churches in communion with the pope, gives a new vision and a new basis of ecumenical dialogue.[4]

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[1] Thurian, "L'organisation du ministère dans l'Eglise primitive selon saint Ignace d'Antioche," VC, XXI (1967), p. 37.

[2] Thurian, "L'ordination des pasteurs," VC, XV (1961), p. 211.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Interview with Max Thurian, at Taizé, December 28, 1966.

The Family of God

The Church is a home, a family with innumerable brothers and sisters.

> In the Church, the whole natural family life finds itself transformed; and those who have left all to follow Christ discover a hundred-fold, in the present time, in the heart of the Church, the family of the Father, dwellings, brethren, sisters, children and mothers, in a fullness of family community spiritualized in Christ.[1]

This reality of the family of God is apparent in the symbol at the foot of the cross, in Mary, mother of the beloved disciple, her son.[2]

To see the Church as a family can lead to the exclusion of strangers, the shunning of outsiders. This isolationism is totally foreign to Thurian's thought. He sees the family of the Father as essentially invisible and known to the Father alone. It "extends immeasurably beyond the picket fences of our sometimes narrow ecclesiologies. Christ died for all men; in the vastness of the world, the Spirit breathes where he will."[3]

The Bride of Christ and the Servant Church

The concept of the Church must be tempered and balanced by the biblical images, especially those of the vine, the Bride, the dwelling of God. To understand the Church as the Bride of Christ is to understand her as a person in special relation to her Lord. Like Mary of Bethany, she is at the feet of Christ in an attitude of adoration and contemplation.

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[1] Thurian, _Mary, Mother of All Christians_, trans. by Neville B. Cryer (New York: Herder and Herder, 1964), p. 169. [translation of _Marie, mère du Seigneur, figure de l'Eglise_] Hereinafter referred to as MMC.

[2] Thurian, "Problèmes posés aux Protestants par la mariologie," _Positions protestantes face au dogme catholique_, Vol. II of _Mariologie et oecuménisme_, Bulletin de la Société Française d'Etudes Mariales, 20th year (1963), p. 91.

[3] Thurian, _Visible Unity and Tradition_, trans. by W. J. Kerrigan (Baltimore: Helicon Press, 1962), p. 112. [translation of _L'unité visible des chrétiens et la tradition_] Hereinafter referred to as VUT.

> It not only is God's servant for activity in the world. It also is called to give voice to the prayer, the praise, and the adoration of Christians, of believers but also of the whole creation which sighs for God. Therefore the church not only has an interim active role until the return of Christ, but also a permanent contemplative role, for it is to find itself again in the kingdom of God.[1]

But even as Bride, the Church is also servant: she is servant because she is in total dependence upon Christ.[2] Like the mother of Jesus, the Church is humble handmaid, the poor of Yahweh awaiting their Savior in prayer.[3] The Bride of Christ is called to a life of holiness; as poor handmaid she is detached and free with regard to the powers and riches of the world.[4]

This servant quality of the Church, shown forth in her mission and her holiness, cannot in any way authorize her to impose herself to rule or to control.[5] In commenting on the Constitution *Lumen Gentium* of the Second Vatican Council, Thurian was pleased that the Catholic Church speaks of herself as poor and as a servant of man: "Everything that is done to make the Catholic Church appear in an attitude of service, everything that underlines the necessity of renouncing human power and that reveals the Church as a servant before her Master, must be said to foster unity."[1] Without totally abandoning the juridical aspect of the Church, Thurian would prefer to see the idea of right replaced by the idea of charism, and the idea of power replaced by the idea of service. "These two Biblical notions of gift and service imply the virtue of poverty."[2]

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[1] LTM, p. 64.

[2] *Ibid*., p. 65.

[3] MMC, pp. 56-57.

[4] LTM, p. 65.

[5] MMC, p. 58.

Thurian's statement that the Church is "entirely oriented toward the coming kingdom of God" must be read in both immediate and total context.[3] It is as Bride that she is thus oriented; thus she is not subjected to the realities of this world. He is most insistent throughout his work that the Church is here to serve mankind in this world; that the Church is mission. Here, then, we have not the view that the earthly life of man is to be despised in favor of a constant gaze toward heaven, but a view of the life of the Church in her role as Bride, in her continuing contemplative dialogue with the Lord, looking towards the Kingdom of the End-time.

One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic

Although current ecclesiology does not examine so often and in such detail the categories of one, holy, catholic, and apostolic; nevertheless, many modern Protestant writers are re-examining these concepts as fruitful for a fuller appreciation of the Church and as possessing ecumenical value.

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[1] Martin Glynn, "Ecumenism and the Council: An Interview with Max Thurian," Month, XXXI (March, 1964), p. 171.

[2] Thurian, "Walking Together to Christ," Steps to Christian Unity, ed. by John A. O'Brien (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1964), p. 134.

[3] LTM, p. 65.

Unity

The unity of the Church, in Thurian's thought, has many complexities and considerable ramifications. In this section, we shall limit the presentation to a rather brief statement; a full treatment will be found subsequently.[1] The Church is one. The basis for this title is the unity, inviolable and not subject to rupture or ultimate dissolution, of the Body of Christ. The cause of unity is the sacrament of baptism. Because of the sin of man, this unity is not now manifested visibly in a unity of fundamental faith and of sacramental life.[2]

Holiness: Simul Justus et Peccator

Thurian's concept of the holiness of the Church reposes firmly upon the principles of the Reformation. We can distinguish two interlocking themes: the Church is holy; men are sinners--but sinners constantly pardoned.

> In so far as it is the Body of Christ, the universal community and spiritual institution founded by the Lord and filled with the Spirit, the Church is holy. It is holy in the Word of God which it proclaims, in the sacraments of the Presence and work of God which are celebrated, in the order of love and unity which it both commands and maintains.[3]

But the Church is also a community of sinners. The nature of men is corrupt from the roots, remains always sinful;

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[1] See below, Chapter VIII.

[2] LTM, p. 65. See comments below, pp. 74-75.

[3] MMC, pp. 24-25; see also LTM, p. 65.

men can have no merit in themselves. The Church, therefore, knows full well the presence of sin and its consequences.[1] On the other hand, these sinners are constantly pardoned.[2] Men have been grafted into Christ, the true Vine, and in him they bear new foliage and fruit. Man, always a sinner, has been justified and made holy by the power of the Resurrection of the Lord.[3] It is Christ who is the life of men and their holiness.

> . . . divested of all inherent and permanent holiness, without any merit, neither the Christian, whoever he be, nor the Church, can be the object of veneration. Only Christ in them should receive honor, and not in any way their person, their nature, their virtues, their faith.[4]

We may say that the Church, like Christ himself, is of two natures: holy, but not infallible; human, but not solely a society of sinful men.[5] The two "natures" of the Church are not separate, but neither should they be confused. One must distinguish in her between the holy functions and the sinful men who accomplish these things; between the holy ministry of Word and sacraments and the sinful ministers.[6] "The Church is the sign of the presence of Christ. The Holy Spirit is always in the Church. However, the humanity of the Church invites her to judge herself often in the light of the Word of God."[1]

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[1] MMC, pp. 24-25.

[2] LTM, p. 65.

[3] Thurian, "L'anthropologie réformée," Irénikon, XXV (1952), p. 52.

[4] Thurian, "Mariology (Reformed)," in Ways of Worship, ed. by Pehr Edwall et al. (New York: Harper and Brothers, Publishers, 1951), p. 309.

[5] Thurian, "Jésus-Christ vrai dieu et vrai homme," Part II: "Les conséquences du dogme de Chalcédoine sur le plan du ministère de l'Eglise," VC, VI (1952), p. 110.

[6] LTM, pp. 65-66.

The person of Christ is holy by nature, holy in its complete essence. But his body is not holy as body; it is holy because it cannot be separated from the concept of his person. The Church is the Body of Christ, but not physically identical or co-terminous with his fleshly body. As Body of Christ, the Church is radically holy, because it is in perfect union with the Head, who is holiness himself, and because it is redeemed. But it is not yet triumphant, nor yet fully present to its Head in glory; rather, it is in process, on pilgrimage. Thus the Body of Christ is imperfect, even sinful, in its members. Yet we can still speak of the Church as the holy Body of Christ. What is sinful, what is lacking in this radically holy Body must be "filled up."[2]

To Thurian, in a position securely within the Reform, the Church is not simply to be identified with Christ. It is not Christ present on earth; it is not the continuation of the Incarnation. From the evidence presented, it is safe to conclude that the Church is seen to be holy not in its nature, but holy because of its origin, and of what it contains and commands. If this interpretation is correct, then Thurian's theology of the holiness of the Church is harmonious and without contradiction.

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[1] Thurian, "Les conséquences du dogme," p. 111.

[2] Col. 1:24.

Catholicity: Fullness

Catholicity, for Thurian, is unquestionably _fullness_. Rather than place his emphasis on universality, meaning "on the whole" or "generally" (_katholos_), he concentrates on the aspect of "wholeness," "completion" (_holos_).

Fullness of Truth: The Christian and the Universal Judgment of the Church

The Church is catholic, first of all, because it possesses the fullness of truth. Within the Church is found the greatest fullness of truth possible in this world.[1] The judgments and thoughts of individual Christians or ecclesiastics may be true, but the judgment of the universal Church alone can give us fullness of truth.[2]

The individual Christian ought always to rely on the Church. For God has not called men alone, as individuals, but his vocation is to the Church, and the Spirit is given primarily to the community, where each Christian is a member in solidarity with others.[3] The judgment of the universal Christian community is more sure than that of the local community or of the individual. Personal opinions, especially vague beliefs or purely sectarian theories, must be submitted to the judgment of the universal Church, even if one cannot see the cogency of her judgments or of her faith.[4] This, a first and essential principle of unity, has not always been observed, and divisions and schisms have originated constantly.[1]

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[1] LTM, p. 66. [2] _Ibid_. [3] _Ibid_., p. 20.

[4] _Ibid_., p. 126. See also Thurian, _Confession_, trans. by Edwin Hudson, Studies in Ministry and Worship (London: SCM Press, Ltd., 1958), p. 132. [translation of _La Confession_] Hereinafter referred to as CFS.

Perhaps this principle of community understanding is most evident in the study and interpretation of the Scriptures. The Scriptures should be an object of communitarian and universal explication, and the individual Christian should remain humble in the face of this study.[2] This does not mean that the Bible should not be read freely and frequently by each one, and that each Christian, enlightened by the Holy Spirit, cannot find illumination therein; however,

> he is able to have firm assurance concerning the Christian truth only in a communitarian study of the Bible, that is to say, that the truth can be discovered by the individual only in the Church-reading of the Scripture, or more exactly, in the Scripture as read and explained by the Church, the total and ecumenical community of believers of all places and of all times.[3]

This ecumenical reading of the Scriptures is the basis of a certain infallibility in the Church, to which notion Reformed theology is quite open--namely, that the Church can thereby be certain of the truth of her Credo. So the faith of the Church in these times ought to be the faith of each Christian.[4] Judgment on the faith of the Church does not belong to the individual; this judgment can be passed only by the Church herself, through synods and an ecumenical council, always subject to the ultimate judgment of the Word of God.[1]

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[1] Thurian, "Jésus-Christ vrai dieu et vrai homme," Part I: "Le concile de Chalcédoine et l'unité de l'Eglise," VC, VI (1952), p. 50.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Thurian, "Spiritualité protestante," p. 376.

[4] Ibid., pp. 377-78.

The Problem and Attempted Solutions

It is clear that Thurian refers here to the judgment in matters of faith and morality, and the "ecumenical reading" of Scriptures, as a function of the universal Church, by which he must mean, as has been explained, the "community" of local churches. It is difficult to see how this can mean anything else than a consensus of all local congregations, presumably expressed publicly by various more or less organized world bodies (the World Council of Churches, the various National Councils of Churches, the Vatican, the World Baptist Federation, etc.).

The difficulty here is immediately obvious. Surely there is nothing like a consensus in the entire community of churches on many very important matters of faith. One has only to compare the doctrine of the Church or of the Eucharist, for example, among diverse church bodies. The problem grows overwhelmingly in difficulty if one considers some sort of real consensus of all the local congregations on a popular level. To add to this the dimension of current theological and university thought makes it insuperable.

Further, we have Thurian's own statements which are based on the realization that there is no consensus: faith is able to express itself today only in diverse confessions of faith of particular churches.[1]

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[1] Ibid.

How then can a Christian rely on the universal Church for judgments of faith, for true exegesis of the Scriptures; how can he characterize his own thoughts as "vague beliefs or purely sectarian theories," or above all as "heresies"? Conversely, how can he be sure of faith, morality, and his reading of Scripture? What disastrous effects does this have on infallibility and indefectibility, both of which have a place in Thurian's ecclesiological vocabulary?

Thurian's solution to this problem, at least what may be implied as his solution, is three-fold: surety of judgment, first of all, is given by a truly ecumenical council. The nature and role of a truly ecumenical council will be discussed below,[2] but it will be sufficient here to note that there has not been one since the "First Seven" of the patristic era. Second, faith is growing towards a unity tomorrow, as the narrowness of all local churches gradually gives way through "ecumenical going-beyond" to a truly ecumenical and common faith. Third, there is consensus on the basic and essential doctrines of the Christian message: the Triune God, redemption by Jesus Christ through his cross and Resurrection, etc. (Presumably, the common faith declarations of the World Council of Churches, to which the Roman Catholic Church can surely subscribe, are an example of this).

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[1] Interview with Max Thurian, at Taizé, December 28, 1966.

[2] See below, pp. 133-35.

Now, this is very good for the future. But the dilemmas of the present remain unsolved. Here we can see the close relationship of Thurian to Schütz. His solution, no doubt, is to live the today of God, with all its difficulties and uncertainties, and strive for the unity of tomorrow: an existential approach to the problem.

The Catholic ecclesiologist would see the same need: for the ecumenical judgment on faith, for universal consensus. But he would find his solution in the consensus of the Catholic Church, past and present, as the best manifestation of the Kingdom on earth, as the infallible and indefectible (in its nature) Body and instrument of Christ.

At any rate, to both Reformed and Catholic thinkers, the individual is within the Church catholic, which alone possesses the fullness of truth; he relies on her judgment, finds knowledge and salvation through her reading of the Scriptures, is obedient in a community of brothers to Christ in this Church, and prays in, with, and through the Church.[1]

The fullness of truth in the Church is borne and transmitted in the Word and sacraments which she proclaims and administers. The liturgy is the Church's ordinary form of proclaiming the truth: the Church "proclaims the truth in the process of glorifying its Lord; its theology is essentially doxological."[2] However, in order to proclaim truly the fullness of truth, the liturgy must contain the fullness of faith and adoration inherited from the early Church.[1]

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[1] Thurian, "Spiritualité protestante," pp. 378-82.

[2] VUT, p. 97.

Fullness in Space, Time, and Life

Spatial fullness is another element in the catholicity of the Church. The Church must be rich with the totality and fullness of creation: all races, nations, and cultures are part of the variegated wholeness of the Church.[2]

> The fullness of the church accrues to it from the fact that it incorporates the spiritual experience of all men throughout time and space in the immense diversity of that experience. This fullness of the church universal renders relative all nationalisms and particular or recent traditions.[3]

The Church must be alert to and embrace all cultures. The influence of the Western, Latin, European church has dominated Christianity for entirely too long. Adaptation is essential; the Church must make room for the world's diversity. Especially is this important with regard to the African and Asian nations of today.[4]

The Church is rich also in the fullness of history, in her presence to all time. The Church possesses a continuity in its experience. Thurian sees this catholicity in time as tradition: "The spirit of living tradition, of continuity in experience, of fidelity in faith, is the catholic spirit."[5]

The fullness of the universal Church is a fullness of life. Not only does the Church bear life within herself--the

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[1] _Ibid._

[2] _Ibid._, p. 85.

[3] LTM, p. 66.

[4] VUT, pp. 94-95.

[5] Thurian, "Pastorale liturgique," VC, XI (1957), pp. 127-28. See also VUT, p. 93.

Word, the Eucharist, the sacraments--but it brings all human life in itself into Christ, as a new creation.[1] In the life of the Church, the entire being of man is engaged for the praise and the service of God. Therefore, by Christian liturgy and by Christian moral life in union with the Church, man is brought to the fullness of life in Christ.[2]

Finally, the Church possesses a fullness of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, manifested in its members through witness or a particular ministry: the apostolate, prophecy, teaching, miracles, healing, administration.[3]

That the Church is catholic, in sum, means that in the Church is the plenitude of truth, spatial fullness, temporal fullness, and fullness of life. Enriched by what each contributes, the Church tends towards visible unity over the face of the globe.[4]

Apostolicity

The Church is apostolic

> because it recognizes its fundamental identity with the church of the apostles of Christ, such as it appears to us in holy scripture. The church is apostolic by its fidelity to holy scripture, understood in the spirit of the apostolic tradition across the centuries. It is apostolic by its celebration of the sacraments instituted by Christ and celebrated by the apostles. It is apostolic by the continuity of its ministry in the service of Christ. It is apostolic because it is missionary and because, until the glorious return of Christ, it never ceases to proclaim the gospel to all men.[5]

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[1] VUT, p. 84.

[2] LTM, p. 66.

[3] Thurian, "La communauté de Cluny," pp. 110-11.

[4] VUT, p. 85.

[5] LTM, p. 66. Many of the ideas mentioned here in sim-

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The Pilgrim Church

If the Church is viewed in the context of history, we can see these marks--unity, holiness, catholicity, apostolicity--but we can also see that the Church "is the people of God marching in this world, on the way to her yet unreached consummation."[1] Although the Church is invited to join in the worship of heaven in anticipation, it is not yet fully triumphant. "In its worship and in its Eucharist, as in its life, the Church 'goes forth' towards Christ 'without the camp of this world' [Hebrews 13:10-16] bearing the reproach of Christ."[2]

All of the churches, including the Roman Catholic Church, are pilgrim churches, characterized in every respect by provisionality.[3]

The Church Invisible and the Church Visible

Since the Reformation, the question of the visible and invisible Church has played a more or less important role in

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ple statements will be treated more fully below: apostolic tradition (Chapter IV); the sacraments (Chapter V); the continuity of the ministry (Chapter VII).

[1] "Vatican II and Ecumenical Dialogue," p. 26. (italics his).

[2] Thurian, The Eucharistic Memorial, trans. by J. G. Davies, Ecumenical Studies in Worship, Nos. 7 and 8 (2 vols.; Richmond, Va.: John Knox Press, 1961), II, 60. [translation of L'Eucharistie, mémorial du Seigneur; sacrifice d'action de grâce et d'intercession] Hereinafter referred to as EM.

Thus, clearly, the theology following on the concept of the Body of Christ does not detract or contradict Thurian's views on the Church and the churches.

[3] Heijke, Ecumenical Light, p. 186.

theological thought, in apologetics, and in polemical writing. In a generation where heat seems to have, under the guidance of the Spirit, given way to light, it will be instructive to see how Thurian conceives of these realities, since he comes from and thinks within the framework of a Reformed tradition to which he is most faithfully committed; yet he has unity always as his goal and attempts to examine all controversy in this light.

Invisible

The _invisible_ Church is the entire people of God. This mystery surpasses the ecclesiastical institution, overflows the Church as a community of the baptized structured by ministries. God alone in his love knows the extent and entirety of his people.[1]

> All baptized people are part of the church, but the latter embraces potentially all those whom Christ secretly makes ready for the revelation of his love. Thus the church is much more vast and numerous than it appears to be in the eyes of the world.[2]

Visible

The _visible_ Church, the institution of salvation, is the sign and sacrament of the invisible Church; there is a close bond between the two.[3]

The Body of Christ

The image used to designate this visible Church is the Body of Christ:

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[1] LTM, p. 63.

[2] _Ibid_., p. 64.

[3] _Ibid_., p. 63.

> The body of Christ is the church as a visible organism in the service of the Lord, an instrument of his living word, turned toward the world and expressing itself through organized ministries.
>
> The church, the body of Christ, is a tangible reality, visible, organized, structured, manifested both locally and universally.[1]

This is not merely an analogy, but the expression of a profound reality.[2] The Church is the actual humanity on earth of Jesus glorified.[3] Christ is the Head of this Body, and we are the members, each in a place chosen by God. But the Head and the Body are seen, together, as a unique thing: the Church.[4] The Church exists and acts only in Christ.

The Church is called together by the Word, but it is in the liturgy that it becomes a Body. "The Church united by worship is no longer an assembly of individuals professing common religious ideas; it is a body where each member abandons preoccupation with self only in order to ponder Jesus Christ, who lives in him and in all his brothers."[5] Because the Church is a Body, in her liturgical actions the members are indissolubly united to their Head; therefore, neither have we been left orphans, to depend upon our own powerless resources, nor is Christ alone before the Father. He carries with him the whole Church, his Body, in his act of praise and in his prayer.[6]

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[1] _Ibid_., p. 64.

[2] _Ibid_.

[3] Thurian, "La souffrance dans le plan de Dieu," VC, XII (1958), p. 135.

[4] _Ibid_.

[5] Thurian, _Joie du ciel sur la terre_: _Introduction à la vie liturgique_ (Paris: Delachaux et Niestlé, S.A., 1946), p. 23. Hereinafter referred to as JCT.

[6] EM, I, 58-59.

United to his heavenly intercession, the Church can and must pray for all men, for their salvation, and for the manifestation of the Kingdom.

The bond among the members of the Church is so close that each member shares in all the life and gifts of the Church.

The Church as Institution

The Church, in its visible, manifest, concrete form is an institution, founded by Jesus Christ to transmit his living Word.

> However, Christ's attitude with regard to institutions is clearly eschatological. The institution should not become a perpetual installation in the world. If it is penetrated with the Spirit, it is a dynamic sign of our provisory situation in this world whose image is a passing one. The institution, fulfilled and interiorized by the Holy Spirit, recalls simultaneously that Christ assumed our human nature fully and that we are strangers and travelers on earth waiting for the glorious appearance of Christ and his Kingdom.[1]

Further, the institution of the Church is the milieu prepared by the Holy Spirit where the fullness of truth is to be understood, proclaimed, and believed in the most authentic manner.[2]

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[1] Thurian, The One Bread, trans. by Theodore Dubois (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1969), pp. 55-56. Hereinafter referred to as OB.

[translation of Le pain unique (which constitutes Part I of OB) and La foi en crise (Part II). Le pain unique is also substantially the same, with a few minor variations, as the paper "Christ, the Holy Spirit and the Ministry" (unpublished paper, presented to the World Council of Churches, Division of Studies, Commission on Faith and Order, No. FO/66:46, August, 1966, mimeographed). Pp. 89-100 is a translation of "Intercommunion," VC, XVII (1963).]

[2] LTM, p. 9.

Unity and Divisions

If there is one visible Church, why the divisions among Christians? The Body of Christ is a single person; it has a fundamental unity; it cannot be divided. However, in the concrete manifestations of the life of Christians, the fact cannot escape us that division has compromised this fundamental unity and disguised it from view.[1] This division does not destroy fundamental unity. It is a sin unworthy of those who have been "adopted all together, in one baptism, to constitute one single body radiant with the love of Christ in the bosom of the human family."[2] The divisions, then, are purely external; the Body of Christ cannot really be divided. It follows that "in this confession of our sin of disunity, this recognition of our responsibility in the division of Christians, there must be entailed a real change in our lives."[3]

It would appear, upon examination of these statements, that the unity of the visible Body of Christ is itself invisible, that is, hidden from view: "God knows all who belong to him in the invisible unity of the Body of Christ."[4] But in another place, Thurian seems to disagree that there is this invisible unity:

> The unity of the universal Church was conceived [in an earlier period] as an invisible reality, mixed up with the communion of saints. This universal invisible Church seemed not to have a true organic connection with the many congregations. Since the bond between Christ and the Church is so little marked in such an ecclesiology, there is no assurance that the Church thus understood transmits

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[1] VUT, p. 114. [2] LTM, p. 28. [3] VUT, p. 113.

[4] VUT, p. 4. (italics mine).

> truly the Word of God; there cannot be any discipline of faith: conscience and sincerity are criteria of truth. Church unity is content with purely external manifestations, and the tendency is toward formalism.[1]

While still leaving the major analysis of unity to a further section of this study,[2] it is necessary to point out some difficulties here, or at the least to summarize some apparently confused thoughts on the unity of the Church. There is a fundamental unity to the Church. Since this is the unity of the Body of Christ, a real unity, not subject to division, it is not destroyed, cannot be destroyed, and unites all in the visible Church. Yet it is hidden from view, and compromised by the sin of man. What we see is disunity, but this is purely external. Is it real? Is fundamental unity a property of both the visible and invisible Church? What is the meaning of "compromised" by sin? At best, this is paradox. More probably, faced with two totally opposed but equally certain truths, Thurian does not have the answer.

Summary

Thurian's views on the Church visible and invisible are problematic and by no means simplistic. Perhaps here we may attempt a summary:

The Church is, first of all, a visible, manifest, concrete and real entity. This visible Church is the Body of Christ: the community of all those who are baptized, who profess the faith and participate in the sacraments of the faith.

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[1] Thurian, "Les conséquences du dogme," p. 110.

[2] See below, Chapter VIII.

It is an institution, structured by ministries, the instrument of God's salvation on this earth. The Body of Christ is manifested and made concrete in local churches, gathered around the proclamation of the Word and the celebration of the Eucharist, under the guidance of their shepherds. The universal Church is the community of these communities.

The visible Christian family of the baptized is part of, and at the heart of the great family of man. This family is the people of God. They are his people because they are oriented towards God, because Christ died for all men and prepares all men for his love and salvation. But the extent of the people of God, and who they are, is known to God's love alone. This is the Church invisible.

No one, therefore, is potentially excluded from the Church invisible. The doctrine of all major Christian theologians, that "outside the Church there is no salvation" loses thereby its overtones of harshness and is in harmony with all modern thought. Who are saved, we do not know; but all are saved in the Church.

The bonds between the visible Church and the invisible Church are these: first of all, because all are men, all are equal members of the great human family.[1] Second, the source of all is Christ: ". . . all authentic truth and all real holiness, even in those who do not acknowledge Christ as Savior, must come from him, because there can be neither truth nor sanctity without him, and because he, as Lord of the world, has the governance of all men."[1] Third, the bond of unity: this unity (of the Body of Christ) is real and fundamental; it unites all men who are in the visible Church.

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[1] LTM, p. 27.

Thus, Thurian rejects an earlier Reformed viewpoint which holds the Church to be the universal and invisible Church of the Elect who are baptized.[2] Rather, the Church is at once invisible, containing not only the Elect, and a visible assembly of the baptized.

The Communion of Saints

Is there yet a greater extension of the Church? The invisible Church, the family of men known to God's love, does not include within it necessarily the dimension of time. At this juncture, we must add the idea of the communion of saints,

> which unites into one all the faithful of every place and time. The church as a universal, visible community draws along with it an additional multitude of people known to God alone and it is also surrounded by the great cloud of witnesses from every place and from all time, living with Christ and waiting for the glorious manifestation of the kingdom of God.[3]

Thurian's doctrine of the communion of saints, although very beautifully stated, is rather vague. It is unclear whether he means it to be an assemblage of the "saints," or a relationship. The evidence, however, seems mostly on the side of relationship. This communion of saints is a bond, a life-stream, extending throughout the universal Church in all places to all men. Further, it extends universally throughout all times. Thus it unites together all men: those who are baptized and live by faith with those who are being mysteriously prepared for a decisive encounter with Christ; those who are now in the family of man with those who have preceded us on earth and now form the Church triumphant in heaven.[1]

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[1] VUT, pp. 4-5.

[2] Max Thurian and Roger Schütz, Revelation: A Protestant View (The Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation: A Commentary), trans. by Kathryn Sullivan, R.S.C.J. and George H. Tavard, A.A. (Westminster, Md.: Newman Press, 1968), p. 71. Hereinafter referred to as RPV [translation of La parole vivante au concile]

[3] LTM, p. 67.

This communion unites all Christians in one and the same life and in one and the same prayer.[2] Always we pray in communion with the whole Church. Faith in the communion of saints situates the prayer of the Christian in the intercession of the universal Church, carried before the Father by Christ the celestial high-priest.[3] And in the liturgical action of the Eucharist, the Christian receives his God, but also receives his brothers in faith. He enters into a close and living communion with the Church.[4]

This bond among the members of the Church is so close that each member shares in a communion of suffering: pain suffered by one member affects the whole organism:

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[1] CFS, pp. 65-66.

[2] MMC, p. 184.

[3] Thurian, _L'homme moderne et la vie spirituelle_ (Taizé: Les Presses de Taizé, 1964), p. 62. Hereinafter referred to as HMV. [There is an English translation of this book: _Modern Man and Spiritual Life_ (abridged; London: Lutterworth Press, 1963); however, because of the abridgment, I have used only the original in this study.]

[4] Thurian, "La vie liturgique," VC, V (1951), p. 133.

> The suffering which brings us into that very special intimacy with Jesus Christ enables us to undertake a more fervent and more effective intercession. We are then so close to Him that we are the better able to confide to Him the distress of our brother men. . . . And this intercession bears fruit for these brethren who suffer, even if they are far removed from us, for in the Communion of Saints we are gathered up in Christ, in His Body the Church.[1]

Church and Kingdom

As the Church is not identical with Christ, so also the Church is not identical with the Kingdom of God. The Church is holy, but as a human institution it is also a sinner.[2]

The Church, then, is not the Kingdom. Indeed, the Kingdom infinitely surpasses the Church in glory.[3] The Church on earth awaits the Kingdom of God at the Parousia.[4] But the Church does more, it is more intimately united to the Kingdom: it is the sign and parable of the Kingdom, the sign that the Kingdom is really there and will be manifested at the Parousia.[5] It is a sacrament of the Kingdom, for in her human frailty and misery, God engages himself and acts.[6] The

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[1] MMC, p. 110.

[2] Thurian, "Les conséquences du dogme," p. 111.

[3] VUT, pp. 18-19.

[4] Thurian, "La vie liturgique," p. 134. See also Thurian, Marriage and Celibacy, trans. by Norman Emerton, Studies in Ministry and Worship, No. 10 (London: SCM Press, Ltd., 1959), p. 72. [translation of Mariage et célibat] Hereinafter referred to as MrCl.

[5] Interview with Max Thurian, at Taizé, December 27, 1966.

[6] Thurian, "Spiritualité protestante," p. 383.

Church ought to be, "in the midst of human realities which remain plainly such, the sign of the presence of Christ, Redeemer and Judge,"[1] and a parable of the Kingdom of God, acted out in this world.[2]

The monastic life, in particular, has the role to insist on this sign of the Kingdom in the world, to be the sign of the waiting for God.[3] Monks "shadow forth the coming Kingdom, where everything will be possessed in common, where there will be no marrying nor giving in marriage, and where all will submit in obedience to the one Shepherd."[4]

However ample our conception of the Church may be, this vision of the Kingdom broadens that conception.[5] And a vision of the Kingdom is a vision of final unity. In this we can see that our unity now is not static and fixed, but dynamic, a living unity, daily enriched, brought further, enlarged towards the final unity of the Kingdom.[6]

Mission

> The mission of the Church is to be the sign of the Kingdom in this world, in very different ways and manners. As the Son was sent by the Father to the world to manifest the Kingdom, the Church is sent by the Son to be the sign of the Kingdom in the world. It can have various shapes of its mission, but it is always so. Therefore, we can say that there is no Church without mission. Mission _is_ the presence of the Church in the world.[7]

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[1] _Ibid_., p. 394.

[2] MrCl, p. 22; also Thurian, "La communauté de Cluny," p. 110.

[3] Interview with Max Thurian, at Taizé, December 27, 1966.

[4] VUT, p. 72. [5] _Ibid_., p. 18. [6] _Ibid_., p. 115.

[7] Interview with Max Thurian, at Taizé, December 28, 1966.

Therefore, the Church is not in the world merely for herself. Even less is she a fortress in which one must be shut up to live in security and better combat the enemy.[1] It is a healthy sign today that the Church has re-awakened to the awareness of the missionary vocation of the Christian.[2] "The Church is that part of the world which knows and announces Christ."[3]

The Church must be attentive to the history of men, sensitive to the signs of the times, and anxious to listen to the whole world in its rich diversity.[4] The missionary function of the Church, then, is first of all to go out to all the world, to rejoice in the truth wherever it is to be found, to recognize the work of God in all kindness, in all beauty, in all human values;[5] and then to lead these values towards perfect maturity, to draw all men to the recognition of the Savior of all.[6] "This is asking of the Church, instead of an attitude of conquest, simply one of attention and friendship."[7]

Instrument of Salvation

The Church is also the instrument and the collaborator of Christ in the work of redemption which she pursues on earth until his return.[1] The Body of Christ is the instrument by which the gifts of salvation, already won by Christ, are applied to all men.[2]

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[1] LTM, p. 63; OB, p. 122.

[2] Biot, Protestant Monasticism, p. 113.

[3] OB, p. 122. [4] *Ibid.*, p. 121. [5] LTM, pp. 23, 63.

[6] LTM, pp. 28, 63. [7] VUT, p. 6.

It is a basic principle of the Reform, and re-iterated by Thurian, that the justification of man depends solely on the work of Christ, with whom a Christian's connection is faith.[3] "The Christian is justified only before God by his faith, the gift of grace, which anticipates and gives rise to every genuinely spiritual impulse within him."[4] The Church does not complete the work of our salvation; for Christ has accomplished everything. Her function is to diffuse in space and time the Good News, ". . . to be the instrument by which all these gifts of salvation may be applied to each and every one in view of the return of the Lord and the manifestation of the Kingdom. . . ."[5] The Church as instrument is the Church as sign for the proclamation of the Gospel to the world. Each Christian, therefore, is sign and instrument of the royal and prophetic priesthood of the Lord in the world.[1]

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[1] Thurian, "Situation du sacerdoce universel et du ministère pastoral," VC, XI (1957), p. 263. See also: LTM, pp. 62, 111; Thurian, "Spiritualité protestante," p. 394.

[2] EM, II, 106.

[3] Biot, Protestant Monasticism, p. 61.

[4] Thurian, "Introductory Essay," The Eucharistic Liturgy of Taizé, trans. by John Arnold (London: The Faith Press, 1962), pp. 14-15. Hereinafter referred to as InET.

It is hardly necessary to add that justification by faith does not exclude good works; rather, salvation is by faith conjoined with works expressed in charity. (See RPV, pp. 70-71).

[5] EM, II, 106. Cf. Thurian, "La souffrance," p. 134.

It is in the celebration of the Eucharist that the Church is placed in the presence of these accomplished acts of redemption, and in turn makes them present, through each individual Christian, to the world.[2]

Royal and Prophetic Priesthood

The Church shares the ministry of prophet, priest, and king with Christ. As a prophetic community, the Church has a ministry of preaching and of teaching which she accomplishes in her worship, her catechesis and her theology.[3] This proclamation of the Word by the Church revives and quickens, interiorizes and gives eschatological direction to the ecclesiastical institution and the liturgy.[4]

> The Church is a holy priesthood in view of offering spiritual sacrifices, pleasing to God through Jesus Christ: the Church has a ministry of praise and of intercession which she exercises in her liturgy.
>
> . . . .
>
> The Church is a royal people, having in the midst of the nations a beautiful way of life in order to lead them to glorify God in the Day of His Visitation: the Church has a ministry of victorious and joyful radiance; she does not teach a moral lesson to the world; rather, she demonstrates by her existence the power of the Resurrection which alone gives peace.[5]

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[1] OB, p. 64.

[2] InET, p. 19.

[3] Thurian, "Situation du sacerdoce," p. 263. See also LTM, p. 111; below, pp. 170-75.

[4] OB, p. 56.

[5] Thurian, "Situation du sacerdoce," p. 263; LTM, p. 111. Thurian here specifically avoids casting the Church in a priestly role because of her offering of the Eucharist. The Eucharist is a sacrifice, according to Thurian, but the knotty problem of the unique sacrifice of Calvary, how the Supper is a sacrifice, and the place of Eucharistic sacrifice in the

It is worthwhile to note that there is no necessary hierarchy among these three functions of prophet, priest, and king. We could say in summary that the Church is a royal priesthood which proclaims the praises of God (prophetic).[1]

The Church, Israel, and Mary

Mary: Figure of the Church

The link between Israel and the Church of Christ, or perhaps, more properly, the key to the typological relationship of the former to the latter is Mary, the Mother of Jesus. Mary is the sign of the transition of Israel to the Church, and it is the same apocalyptic symbol of the Woman which designates Israel, Mary, and the Church.[2]

Jesus, the Son of Man, is the representative of all mankind, but at the same time he is the Suffering Servant, the representative of Israel. In recapitulating both in his own person, he is the Church, subsuming Israel as the New Israel, the Church, which is the family of all men.

Like her son, Mary lives the purpose and the role of figure. Thurian bids us see this in the account of the miracle at Cana:

> In the first part of the account, Mary symbolizes an anxious humanity which is awaiting deliverance, and also that Jewish faith in the Messiah which expects him to be revealed by signs. Fully human in her expectations, she

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Church today is outside the realm of this study. However, concerning the question of mediation and whether or not the Church actually offers, see below, p. 308.

[1] Thurian, "Situation du sacerdoce," p. 263.

[2] MMC, p. 180.

> is the type of all humanity; being still Jewish in her faith, she is the type of Israel; but Christ by the reply that He addresses to her, though it is not a refusal, but an appeal to take a wider look, is going to draw her out of this human situation and the Jewish faith in order to raise her up with Christian faith to a place of being the type of the believing Church.[1]

Thus, Mary "gathers up in herself the whole people of Israel in their expectation, and symbolizes in herself the whole mystery of the Church in its fulfillment."[2]

Daughter of Zion

The people of God had lived in a covenant of God's faithfulness for long centuries, centuries marked by their consistent unfaithfulness. Endless deliverance to their enemies had brought destruction on the nation, but had equally served to prune it and to purify the Remnant. The Mother of Jesus is the ultimate, the quintessential Remnant. She is the personal embodiment of the purified, faithful Daughter of Zion. "Mary, the Daughter of Zion, is the 'Incarnation' of Israel."[3]

It is as Daughter of Zion that Mary is handmaid of her Lord. Him she has long awaited, as the "Poor of Yahweh," and him she serves.[4] Χαῖρε, κεχαριτωμένη! (Luke 1:28): Mary is greeted as Daughter of Zion, as figure of Israel, to whom deliverance is proclaimed.[5] The Lord dwells in her midst, and Mary becomes the Ark of the New Covenant.[6] The Daughter of Zion becomes the symbolic being in whom is revealed the greatest love, mercy, and help of God.[1]

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[1] *Ibid.*, p. 136. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 52. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 16.

[4] *Ibid.*, pp. 56-57. [5] *Ibid.*, p. 15. [6] *Ibid.*, p. 18.

The Daughter of Zion is at once a mystical and an eschatological sign: Mary is the virgin whom the Lord marries in mystical union, and the mother who gives deliverance of the Messianic hope, who brings the End-time on earth.[2] As the eschatological personification of Israel, Mary is the mother of believers, as Abraham, the original personification of Israel, is the father of believers.[3]

The Foot of the Cross

Mary is Daughter of Zion not only at the Incarnation, as the fulfillment of hope and expectation, but even more so at the foot of the cross, where she is the woman in pains of birth, but rejoicing that a man is born; for the Church can only be given birth at the foot of the cross.[4]

At the cross, "the church is born of the spirit of the Crucified and of the blood shed for the redemption of mankind. There the church appears under the figure of Mary as the church-mother of the disciples beloved of Christ, symbolized in the person of John."[5] Here in this symbol is the reality of the family of God, the Mother Church, the Church where all men are brothers.[6] In the water and the blood that flow from the side of Christ are the signs and instruments of motherhood; by baptism the Church gives birth to, and by the Eucharist she nourishes all believers, her children.[1]

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[1] *Ibid*., p. 91. [2] *Ibid*., p. 14. [3] *Ibid*., p. 64.

[4] *Ibid*., pp. 159-61. [5] LTM, pp. 62-63.

[6] Thurian, "Problèmes," p. 91.

There is reached at the moment of the death of her son an intensity of the role of Mary: here she is more than ever figure of the Church, hoping against all hope, suffering the effacement of her fleshly motherhood before the spiritual motherhood of the Church, wrenched from Israel in order to adopt the Gentiles, the younger people who are represented by the beloved Disciple.[2]

> The Virgin Mary will not emerge from this grievous trial of the sword victorious unless she totally accepts in faith that her Son can be at the same time both Messiah King and Suffering Servant, the Son of God and the Crucified. She will not carry off the victory of faith unless she accepts the life of the Cross in her Son, Son of God as He is, and in her own life as believer and mother. Mary, as the first Christian woman and as the type of the Church, must accept fully what St. Paul expressed in Col. 1:24, viz., that she would find her joy in suffering and thus complete in her flesh that which was lacking in the suffering of Christ for His Body, which is the Church.[3]

Virgin and Mother

The Virgin Mary is image of the Church which is both Mother and Virgin.

> . . . the virginity of Mary is a triple sign: a sign of consecration as being set aside for the exclusive service of God; a sign of poverty as one who is called to accept only God's fullness; and a sign of the novelty of the Kingdom which is coming to overturn the laws of natural creation.[4]

The Virgin Church is solitary, powerless, unable to work out her own salvation; in this she gives glory to the fullness and power of God.[5] But this virginity is not shameful, for the Church becomes fruitful by the operation of the Spirit.[1] And therefore the Church which is virgin is at the same time mother.

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[1] MMC, pp. 158-59.

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 115, 148.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 108.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 35.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 31.

Motherhood is the starting-point for understanding the vocation of Mary, and therefore the vocation of the Church. "To speak of Mary is to speak of the Church. The two are united in one fundamental vocation--maternity."[2] The earthly mother of Jesus (especially for St. John in his Gospel) becomes the sign of the mystery of the love for us of the Church our Mother.[3]

Dwelling and Bearer of God

Mary, Daughter of Zion and the new Ark of the Covenant, is she in whom God dwells.[4] God, in the Incarnation, entered into and dwelt in Mary in order to accomplish the act of his presence and his revelation in its most extraordinary and definitive form. Thus she is the sign of God's dwelling within the Church. But as Mary was not simply a passive and impersonal instrument whom we can ignore, so also the Church is not merely a passive dwelling of God, an impersonal and mechanical channel. The Church is alive with an active faith and love.[5] The Church, like Mary, bears within herself the

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[1] Ibid., p. 28. [2] Ibid., p. 9. [3] Ibid., p. 174.

[4] Ibid., pp. 47ff. Thurian here goes into great detail in showing Mary as the New Ark of the Covenant, through an analysis of Luke 1 and 2 and related Old Testament texts, in which he is generally found to be in agreement with modern biblical scholarship.

[5] MMC, pp. 72; 80-81.

Word of God and the Body of Christ, in the Eucharist.[1]

The Sign of Grace

The mother of the Messiah, who is the "incarnation" of Israel, receives the unique title "full of grace," and so becomes a living and sure sign of this fullness of grace which has its origin in Christ, a fullness which is found and proclaimed in the Church our Mother.[2]

The Presence of Mary in and to the Church

Not only is the Mother of Jesus a figure of the Church, but she is within the Church. If to see Mary is to see the Church, then also to see the Church is to see Mary within it. Mary, with all the saints, is present to the life of the Church, and the Church unites itself to her and to all in the communion of saints in the same prayer and praise and the same life in Christ. Moreover, the place of Mary in the communion of saints is pre-eminent.[3] She is the believing woman in the Church. "Mary is truly the first Christian woman, the true believer who, predestined by God's pure grace, enters into His plan by the total offering of her whole personality, by joyous obedience, and peaceful trust in the Word of the Lord."[4]

Difficulties: A Critique

To Thurian, Mary is figure of the Church and she is present now in the communion of saints. But has her role as figure ceased? Is it an historical role, or an ontological one? Ernst bases his perceptive critique upon just this point: possibly Thurian means that Mary was Mother of God and did perform acts of saving significance, but _now_ all this is _only_ in the Church; Mary is present in the Church now only as pre-eminently a believing woman (in the communion of saints): an exemplar, if you will, but with no other function.[1]

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[1] *Ibid.*, pp. 69, 101. [2] *Ibid.*, pp. 21, 58.

[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 184-84; LTM, p. 44. [4] MMC, p. 61.

The words of Thurian seem to bear out the validity of this observation:

> Everything that Mary _was_ and experienced, the Church _is_ and should experience. . . .[2]
>
> The Church therefore becomes, _after_ Mary, and like her, the dwelling-place of God in the Spirit.[3]
>
> At the Annunciation, the Daughter of Zion-Israel has become Mary. . . . Then, at the Cross, the Daughter of Zion-Mary has been _replaced_ by Mother Church; the Messianic motherhood of Mary becomes the spiritual motherhood of the Church, of which Mary remains the type.[4]

Perhaps the most telling passage is:

> Mary has completed her role as the human mother of the Messiah, and the Mother of God. . . . The temporary and maternal function of Mary in regard to the historic Christ makes way for the final, motherly function of the Church, in regard to the mystical Christ, the Body of Christ and its members. . . . The motherhood of the Church is perpetual, whereas that of Mary was only temporary.[5]

It would seem clear, therefore, that Thurian sees

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[1] Ernst, "Mary: Sign of Contradiction," p. 549.

[2] MMC, p. 10. italics mine.

[3] _Ibid_., p. 54. italics mine.

[4] _Ibid_., p. 180. italics mine.

[5] _Ibid_., p. 141.

Mary's place as historical figure of the Church. It is difficult to know precisely what this means. To speak of Mary, to see Mary is to speak of and to see the Church: thus, we can see the Church through a hearing of or a meditation upon the New Testament (and its fulfillment of the Old) when it speaks of Mary. But what we really see is the figure of the Church--a mystical foreshadowing of what the Church, when it comes into being, will be. And since the Church now is, these meditations on Mary have only an historical and a faith value; they form a context, it is true, for our understanding of the Church, but they are neither existent nor ultimately relevant now.

On the other hand, the Catholic view may best be summarized by Ernst: Mary is now the ontological "first realization" of the Church; further, she is, now, what the Church has not yet become: she is the personal realization of what the Church is sacramentally.[1] "Mary is then the real, and not merely the ideal, figure of the Church. . . . She is then the actual and active figure of the Church."[2]

Israel, too, must therefore be an historical figure of the Church. The role of this nation, as far as the Christian is concerned, ceased at the birth of the Church. The Church's relation to the Jewish religion today is first of all to be one of ecumenical dialogue (ecumenical in a broader sense), but also a relationship of indebtedness, and a special love for these people, our brothers from the same mother (Israel), and a special wish for unity. For the Church was born of Israel as the Church was born of Mary. The Church stands in the theological, liturgical, and spiritual tradition of Israel; and the unity of Israel (that is, of the Jewish people) and of the Church will be the common destiny of men in the Kingdom of the Messiah, Jesus Christ.[1]

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[1] Ernst, "Mary: Sign of Contradiction," pp. 549-50.

[2] Ibid.

To return to a consideration of Mary, she should be, in Thurian's words, "a cause of rejoicing and prayer, rather than division" in the ecumenical age.[2] Unfortunately, however, there still seems to be division on the place of Mary. Never once does Thurian refer to Mary as Mother of Christians.[3] Only once does he come close to this title, in referring to her as a "spiritual mother in the Christian community, the most venerated of all spiritual mothers found in the Church, the spiritual mother par excellence of the beloved and faithful disciple, of the brother of Jesus, which every Christian is called to be."[4] This, too, must be taken in the context of Mary who worked out a role in history, a role presumably finished, or rather transformed or assumed into the role of the Church. To Thurian, as to Calvin, and indeed to virtually all Christians, the _Church_ is our Mother.[5] In this, Thurian is in essential agreement not only with the Reformers, but with Barth, who puts the case succinctly:

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[1] LTM, p. 38.

[2] MMC, p. 7.

[3] This is in spite of the English translation of the title of the book on Mary. Thurian's own title is: _Marie, mère du Seigneur, figure de l'Eglise_.

[4] MMC, p. 170.

[5] Evidently, Thurian is opposed to Pope Paul VI's defi-

> . . . to the creature cooperating with the divine work are in the last analysis applied all the dignity and all the privileges which are forever being attributed to Mary . . . . what Roman Catholicism calls the Church corresponds exactly to the creature thus exalted.[1]

Summary

The Church, seen in Mary as figure and first realization, is therefore Daughter of Zion, born at the cross of the Remnant of Israel; Mother of believers, bearing God within her; consecrated and poor virgin, living the Christian paradox in faith; and a sign of the fullness of God's grace and saving mercy and of the ultimate eschatological triumph of the Kingdom of God.

The Foundation and Life of the Church

The Founding of the Church

> The church was founded by Christ in three major stages. First of all, Jesus gathered his twelve apostles to witness to his life on earth, to his death, and to his resurrection. This group or body of the twelve is the nucleus of the church, both as a people in continuity with Israel composed of twelve tribes, and as an institution for transmitting the word of Christ and the sacraments of his presence and work. The twelve represent the whole church as a people, the laity (from laos: people), and also the church as an institution, the ministry. In the twelve we recognize all the laity and all the ministers of the church: the laity as disciples and witnesses, the deacons as ser-

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nition of Mary as "Mother of the Church"; he holds the usual, and all too often well-founded, Protestant fears of the Marian definitions, specifically as Mediatrix and above all as Coredemptrix. (from interview with Max Thurian, at Taizé, December 27, 1966).

[1] Karl Barth, Church Dogmatics, Vol. I, Tome ii, fasc. 1, pp. 128-134, quoted in Jerome Hamer, "Mary and the Protestants," Worship, XXXVII (October, 1963), p. 581.

> vants and assistants of Christ, the pastors as ministers of the word and the sacraments, the bishops as pastors jointly of the universal church and severally of the local churches. Then, at the foot of the cross the church is born of the spirit of the Crucified and of the blood shed for the redemption of mankind. There the church appears under the figure of Mary as the church-mother of the disciples beloved of Christ, symbolized in the person of John. Finally, the church is manifested at Pentecost in its universal mission under the power of the Holy Spirit. Thus the church was founded by Christ as a universal body, as mother of the faithful, and as instrument of the Holy Spirit for the worldwide proclamation of the gospel.[1]

The Church is a new creation of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. If it is possible to isolate one of the three events mentioned above as the major or primal creation-event of the Church, it would surely be the moment of Christ's death on the cross. Thurian sees the crucifixion as almost entirely ecclesial symbol.[2] This moment comprehends within itself both all of the Old Testament signs of the new Creation, the new Temple, the New Covenant, and the New Testament Pentecost itself:[3] "We have here the first act of the Johannine Pentecost: the Pentecost of the Crucified who bows His head to transmit the Spirit to His Church, represented by Mary and the disciple."[4]

Thus the Church was born in a moment of supreme pain, suffering, humiliation, and death, but also in the same moment of the greatest triumph, of victory over just these things.

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[1] LTM, pp. 62-63.

[2] MMC, chapter 9, passim.

[3] Cf. Zech. 12:10; 13:1; 14:8; Ezek. 36:25-27; 47:1-12; Rev. 22:1.

[4] MMC, p. 155.

Continuity, Indefectibility, and Reform

There is a true continuity in the Church; it is not obliged to re-build itself entirely from its foundations. Rather, there is a building-up in it, proceeding from the institution of Jesus Christ. This fact must not be lost sight of, although there is still the duty and right of endlessly reforming the Church.[1] Nor may it be assumed that the Apostolic Age was a golden age followed merely by successive ages of infidelity.[2]

Is there continuity in the Church? Is this Church through the ages faithful? Thurian admits indefectibility to the Church:

> The holiness of the church signifies God's faithfulness toward his people and implies indefectibility. The gates of hell shall not prevail against the church. The church cannot compromise the fundamental Christian faith nor sacramental life. Even in the darkest moments of the history of the church, Christ preserves in it the ministry essential to the salvation of mankind.[3]

The Church of the Apostles is the norm against which the Church must measure herself. If the Church is faithful to this ancient Church, she is faithful to the New Testament, which is the objective witness of the self-understanding of the Apostolic Church, faithful to the Word of God.[4]

Thus, on the one hand, the Church is a continuous and permanent institution, divinely founded and indefectible.

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[1] MrCl, pp. 96-97.

[2] VUT, pp. 35-36.

[3] LTM, p. 66.

[4] Thurian, "Le dogme de l'assomption," VC, V (1951), p. 19.

But if this alone is recognized, the Church's life becomes impoverished and one-sided. There is a continuing dialectic character to the Church; so, on the other hand, the Church is event: continuously reanimated and restructured by the living Word of God and by the Holy Spirit.[1] The constant reform of the Church must beware not to break unity by speaking against charity, or by ignoring the ensemble of the signs of Christ which make up the continuity of the Church.[2]

The paradox of the Church is that it must have both permanence and renewal, it must be both institution and event, it must have both indefectible continuity and reform. And all this occurs because the Church daily both gives and receives the proclamation of the Word. "The church receives the word of God that reforms it continually within the perpetual divine institution."[3]

The Holy Spirit and the Life of the Church

It is the continuing presence of the Spirit which ensures that the Church will always be reformed and renewed, that she will always subject herself to judgment under the Word of God.

The first role of the Holy Spirit is to recall and speak to the Church that which he has heard from Christ himself.[1] This is not a new revelation, but the ever-recurring prodding in the heart of the Church to grasp anew the eternal Good News of Christ.[2] The Spirit reveals the Father and the Son in the Word of God, teaches all things, conducts the Church in the whole truth, and brings an ever-new understanding to this truth.[3] The Spirit, along with the Word, governs the Church; he establishes gifts and ministries for the building up of the Body of Christ.[4] It is the Holy Spirit, sent by the Father and the Son, who invests the apostles with his power in carrying out their mission and their ministry.[5] This charge of the apostolate has a permanent, transmissible character; the ministers of the Church participate in this commission of the apostles. The Spirit is a person, a power, and a gift which the ministry of the Church is able to communicate.[6] Indeed, the entire mission and ministry of the Church presupposes the epiclesis of the Spirit. The gift of the Spirit "opens men's hearts to the word of God. . . so that the sacraments be the efficacious signs of Christ's presence, uniting Christians in one single body animated with the same fraternal love."[1]

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[1] LTM, p. 10; MrCl, p. 23.

[2] Thurian, "Développement du dogme et tradition selon la catholicism moyen et la théologie réformée," VC, I (1947), p. 155.

[3] LTM, p. 9. See also OB, p. 144.

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[1] Thurian, "Développement du dogme," p. 153.

[2] LTM, p. 59.

[3] Ibid., pp. 10, 59; Thurian, "Développement du dogme," p. 153; Thurian, Consecration of the Layman: New Approaches to the Sacrament of Confirmation, trans. by W. J. Kerrigan (Baltimore: Helicon Press, 1963), p. 8. [translation of La confirmation, consécration des laïcs] Hereinafter referred to as CON.

[4] LTM, p. 10.

[5] Thurian, "Christ, the Holy Spirit and the Ministry," p. 14. (not found in the later OB).

[6] Ibid.; LTM, p. 10.

Finally, the Spirit manifests himself in signs and wonders as harbingers of the coming Kingdom.[2] He announces the things to come, the things that should happen, and so gives to the Church the true perception of the events of history.[3]

These three aspects of the work of the Spirit in the Church: the recalling of the revelation of Christ, the teaching and illumination of all truth, and the announcing of the things to come, are manifested in the three charisms of which Paul speaks: apostles, doctors, prophets (I Cor. 12:28).[4]

The Church lives every day in its faith, its ministry, and its worship.[5]

The life of the Church in faith is manifested as tradition. "Tradition, indeed, is the life of the Church, attentive to the Holy Spirit repeating ever afresh the Word of God."[6] The Holy Spirit continuously gives the Word of God to the Church; the Scripture lives unfailingly in the Church. But tradition is more than the Scriptures: it is both the whole faith of the Church (dogmas, sacraments, and holiness), and the act of transmission of this faith.[7] This is life:

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[1] OB, p. 60. [2] CON, p. 9. [3] LTM, p. 59.

[4] Thurian, "Développement du dogme," p. 153.

[5] Thurian, "Intercommunion, VC, XVII (1963), passim. These elements of the life of the Church are treated fully below in Chapters IV; VI and VII; and V (respectively).

[6] VUT, p. 11. [7] RPV, p. 30.

". . . the living Word that the living God addresses to a living Church composed of living members."[1]

The life of the community is in its worship, and in the Eucharist pre-eminently. The life of Christ vivifies the life of the Church; for it is Christ who is the life, regeneration, and holiness of the Church and of each Christian. The Eucharist makes the Church; it gathers the community together and gives it its shape. The Bread of Life nourishes the members of Christ, and it is in this life that the Church really becomes a Body, no longer simply an assembly of individuals professing common religious ideas. The liturgical, celebrating community expresses the congregation, which in turn expresses the whole Church.[2]

Life given in the Eucharist renews the life of the Church in the world, develops charity and unity, gives sustenance for the mission of the Church to the ends of the earth, and nourishes the Church for eternal life.[3]

Summary

The Church is a community of men bound to Jesus Christ by faith and baptism, the people and family of God. The Church is manifested in local churches, constituted, expressed and made real by the celebration of the Eucharist. These churches find their unity in faith, in sacraments and in discipline, but exist in a pluralism of manifestations. This diversity gives a richness to the faith of the Church.

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[1] Ibid., p. 11.

[2] InET, pp. 3, 14; JCT, pp. 13, 23.

[3] InET, pp. 1, 14; EM, II, 124.

The Church is the Bride of Christ and the servant of the Lord; it is pilgrim, on the way to yet unreached consummation; it is the instrument of salvation, a prophetic and royal priesthood.

The Church is one, holy, catholic, and apostolic. The Church is holy by nature, but the Church as Body of Christ is imperfect, even sinful, in its members; for the Church is not simply to be identified with Christ. Catholicity is fullness: fullness of truth, fullness in space, time, and life. Since the Church contains fullness of truth, all men must subject themselves to her universal judgment. And this catholic fullness comes from the ecumenical reading of the Scriptures in the Church, and is proclaimed in the Word, the liturgy, and the sacraments. Catholicity means, too, that the Church must be rich with the fullness of all creation, all races, nations and cultures. The Church possesses also a fullness of the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

The Church invisible is the entire people of God. The visible Church is the sign and sacrament of this invisible Church. The chief image used to designate the visible Church is the Body of Christ. The Word calls together the Church, but in the Eucharist it becomes a body. The bond among all members of this body is so close that each shares in all the life and gifts of the Church. The visible Church is an institution. The unity of the Body of Christ is real and fundamental;

it cannot be destroyed.

The bond or life-stream extending throughout the Church and uniting together all men of all times and all places is the communion of saints. This bond unites all Christians in the same prayer and even in a communion of suffering.

As the Church is not identical with Christ, so also it is not identical with the Kingdom of God; rather, it is the sign and parable of the Kingdom that is to be fully manifested only at the Parousia. And this is the mission of the Church: to be the sign of the Kingdom in this world, to be present in the world and to rejoice in its values, its beauty, and its truth wherever found.

Mary, mother of the Lord, is the figure of the Church. She is the quintessential Remnant of Israel: the personal embodiment of the faithful Daughter of Zion. As Daughter of Zion, she is handmaid, the ark of the New Covenant, at once a mystical and an eschatological sign. At the death of her son she is intensely a figure of the Church, wrenched from Israel in order to adopt the Gentiles. She is the image of the Church which is both Mother and Virgin. She is sign of God's dwelling within the Church, the sign of the fullness of grace found and proclaimed in the Church. Mary, the believing woman, is pre-eminent in the communion of saints.

Christ founded the Church in the gathering together of the Twelve and in the pouring out of his blood at the cross; at Pentecost the Church was manifested in its universal mission. There is true continuity in the Church, an institution divinely founded and indefectible. But on the other hand, the Church is also event, continuously reanimated, reformed, and restructured by the Word: this is the paradox of the Church.

The Holy Spirit, continuously present in the Church, recalls to her the revelation of Christ, teaches and illumines her in truth, and announces the things to come. And in this Spirit the Church lives every day, in her faith, in her ministry, and in her worship, nourished by the Eucharist for eternal life.

CHAPTER IV

THE WORD OF GOD AND THE WORD IN THE CHURCH

Part I: The Word of God

In the celebration of the Eucharist at Taizé, the Gospel is carried into the congregation where it is to be proclaimed. Thus the Word comes into the Church; this is the sign that the Word made flesh truly dwells in our midst.[1] The Church, like Mary, receives and bears within herself the Word of God.[2] And as the Holy Spirit quickened the womb of Mary, so that same Spirit gives life to the Word of God and makes it present and active in the Church.

Because the Word is alive, it does not lie fallow, but it is ceaselessly proclaimed by the Church, awakening the signs of salvation, filling men with the Holy Spirit.[3] Word and Eucharist are two different but conjoint forms of the presence of God and of the spiritual nourishment of the Church.[4] For Jesus Christ is enfleshed in both his Word and his Eucharist.

> This comparison gives a deep spiritual value to the humanity of Scripture. It is not in spite of this humanity but through it that the Word of God in all truth and holiness comes to man, on his own level and his own language. This makes clear that God is really with us in

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[1] InET, pp. 12-13. [2] MMC, p. 68. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 69.

[4] Thurian, "Liturgie et actualité," VC, XX, No. 80 (1966), p. 21.

> written revelation according to the ineffable benevolence which in times past brought him in our midst so that he might dwell among us in Jesus Christ.[1]

The Word of God living, written, and preached calls together the Church.[2] And the Word, together with the Holy Spirit, governs the Church; the Church must judge herself always in the light of the Word. "The Church can be sure of walking in the truth only if she submits herself to the Word of God as it resounds throughout the Scriptures."[3] The Church must constantly be reanimated and restructured by the Word and the Spirit.[4]

The Transmission of the Word

The Word of God, living as a man on earth, was heard, seen, and grasped by men. These individual and collective human reactions to the Word may be called the exterior side of revelation.[5] The Scriptures became the objective data of the original tradition. These must be safeguarded and handed on. Thus, the successors of the apostles have this twofold task.

The deposit of faith must always be preserved in its accuracy.[6] Can the Gospel be modified or falsified? This is impossible, for "through the power of Christ, the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and the collegiate nature of the apostolate--the Gospel would be preserved from alteration in its career in the Church, and its transmission would take place authoritively [sic], insuring original purity and totality."[1]

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[1] RPV, p. 60. See comments below, p. 110, note 1.

[2] LTM, p. 64.

[3] Thurian, "Le concile de Chalcédoine," p. 50; "Les conséquences du dogme," p. 111.

[4] LTM, p. 9.

[5] VUT, p. 56.

[6] VUT, pp. 64, 65, 68, 76.

The apostles and their successors must also transmit faithfully the Word of God: "The apostolic successors are the instruments whereby the apostles transmit the Gospel from generation to generation; the Gospel of the apostles, inspired by the Holy Spirit, remains alive in the Church, and is transmitted faithfully through apostolic successors."[2] But the Gospel is not transmitted solely as a book or a document; it is to be read and preached, to be, in other words, explained and interpreted by the Church. The Gospel is a living Word, and can be transmitted only in the plenitude of the life of the Church, and this plenitude of life is Christ's own life, sacramentally realized in the Church.[3]

Indeed, the Word of God is transmitted in the Church not solely through the preaching and teaching of the collegial apostolate, but also, more simply and perhaps more ordinarily, through the liturgy. In its liturgy and in its prayer, the early Church reveals to us its profound understanding of revelation and transmits to us its faithful interpretation of the Gospel. In liturgy, the Church lives and experiences the Word of God, and this experience is an essential form of tradition. The Church "proclaims the truth in the process of glorifying its Lord; its theology is essentially doxological."[1] Thus the Church produces a living liturgical interpretation of the Scriptures.

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[1] Ibid., p. 59. [2] Ibid., p. 66. See also pp. 57-58.

[3] Ibid., p. 75.

What underlies the whole process of the transmission of the Word is very important. It is Thurian's assumption, we might even say his conviction, that there is a net of interrelationships, always active, which cannot be dissolved. The Word is utterly dependent on the ministry, and the ministry on the Word. The Word is not a book, but a living thing: preached, interpreted, safeguarded, transmitted by men, the successors of the apostles. God has willed that his Word, him*self*, be dependent upon men.

These are not just any men, but men raised up in the Church by the Holy Spirit. And their authority and even authenticity, in turn, depend upon their total fidelity to the Word.[2]

Word and ministry are inextricably bound together. Both find their only place within the Church. For without the Church, both Word and ministry are incomprehensible. It is the Church, the whole Body of Christ, who hears the Word, who transmits, preaches, interprets and keeps inviolate this revelation.

The Preaching and Interpretation of the Word

The ministry of the Church is essentially a ministry of the Word.[1] Therefore, the Church must enjoy full liberty to preach the Gospel to all men.[2]

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[1] *Ibid*, p. 97.

[2] *Ibid*., p. 66.

The Holy Spirit enlivens this Gospel; it is the Spirit who "enables believers to grow in the knowledge of truth, and places in their hearts Christ's abundant word."[3] This Gospel, preached and transmitted in the life of the Church, is interpreted by the Church in the light of the tradition of the Church. For tradition is necessary to understand and explain the Scripture.

> The Bible is not a code of laws which exhausts completely the sense of revealed truth. One must have the correct interpretation of the Church (tradition) in order to discover the fuller sense of the letter of Scripture.[4]

Immediately problems are posed. What is the criterion of authentic tradition? Which Church interprets? What is authentic ministry?[5]

It is here that Protestantism and the Roman Catholic Church most often diverge. As recently as Vatican II, the Catholic Church has asserted the power of the magisterium authorized for authentic interpretation.[1] Although the Council has insisted on the magisterium as service, this does not at all alter the certitude of its authority. The objections of Protestantism are clear: the Catholic position leads to the danger that the magisterium will be placed above the Word, rather than subject to the judgment of the Word.[2] The Protestant tradition, on the other hand, recognizes the necessity of a ministry, but also believes in the independence of the Word with regard to this ministry. Thus the ministry which interprets the Word is not possessed of infallibility; rather, it is still in search, still able to be deceived, and must stand under the judgment of the Word.[3] Protestants and Catholics together must search further for the meaning of magisterium, of what is the ministry of the authentic interpretation of Scripture and tradition.[4]

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[1] Thurian, "Les conséquences du dogme," p. 111.

[2] "Vatican II and Ecumenical Dialogue," p. 29. But to make preaching the essential and almost exclusive activity of the Church, under the pretext that the preaching of the Word is the Word of God, is to run into danger. (Thurian, "Les conséquences du dogme," p. 112). Thurian here is obviously reacting against the non-sacramental, non-liturgical worship of such a large part of the Reformed tradition.

[3] RPV, p. 40.

[4] Thurian, "Un acte oecuménique du Concile: le vote de la Constitution dogmatique sur la révélation," VC, XIX, No. 76 (1965), p. 8. See also RPV, pp. 46-47.

[5] Thurian, "Un acte oecuménique," pp. 8, 10; RPV, pp. 48, 53.

The Problem of Meanings

This synthesis of Word and ministry alive within the Church is not without other problems. The most obvious is that of terminology, and perhaps meaning. How are we to treat the words and concepts of Scripture, Word, Gospel, revelation, and deposit of faith? Are they simply interchangeable, or does each have a special character that distinguishes it from the other?

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[1] _Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation_, 10.

[2] RPV, p. 50. However, the _Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation_ makes many positive and forward steps in ecumenical rapport. Schütz and Thurian see in this work of the Council many things of ecumenical significance. Frequently, they compare it to the work of the Fourth World Conference on Faith and Order (Montreal, 1963), and note the confluence of thought between the two. (See Schütz and Thurian, _La parole vivante au concile_ [2nd. ed.; Taizé: Les Presses de Taizé, 1966], p. 115). [This latter information is found only in the French original and not in the translation, RPV.]

[3] RPV, pp. 51-52.

[4] _Ibid_., p. 53.

Some of the terms seem, at first glance, to be interchangeable. For example, in *Visible Unity and Tradition*, Thurian states that the apostles were transmitters of the Word of God (p. 57), of revelation (p. 58), of the Gospel (p. 59 and *passim*), of the Scriptures (p. 70). On the other hand, the "deposit of faith" occurs only in connection with the rather static terms of "preserved" and "safeguarded" (pp. 64, 66, 76).

From the evidence, only cautious conclusions may be drawn. It seems clear that Scripture and Gospel, in this context, are meant to be the same. Thus, Scripture is granted a broader meaning and is not confined to what is written on a page, for the Gospel is, essentially, the teaching of Christ by which the Church lives. The "deposit of faith" is not strictly identical with Gospel or Word or revelation. Thurian never defines it. From its context, it may be assumed that the deposit of faith is the total "Gospel," or living Word caught, as it were, in one moment of its existence, looked upon as one given frame in a film.

Nor is revelation defined; in fact, it is very rarely mentioned. According to Thurian, it is contained in Scripture. The assumption must be that it is simply interchangeable with Gospel in the broadest sense of the term.[1] Tradition adds nothing quantitatively to revelation.[2]

The identity or separateness of Scripture and the Word is enormously complex; when the total concept of tradition is added, the problem becomes even more difficult. We shall attempt a detailed analysis.

Word of God, Holy Scripture, and Tradition

The Problem

It is evident that a theology of the Word of God in the Church must include both the Holy Scripture and tradition. It is equally evident that a theologian involved in this matter must face the difficulties: what is the relationship of Scripture and tradition to revelation and to each other? Should one embrace the "two-source theory" or present his case for the superiority of one over the other, or even for the exclusivity of one (*sola scriptura*)? The path is torturous, obscure, and filled with obstacles, but it must be travelled.

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[1] In commenting on the *Constitution on Divine Revelation*, Schütz and Thurian say, "Revelation is considered throughout this magnificent text as the living Word that the living God addresses to a living Church composed of living members." (RPV, p. 11). The tone and placement of this quotation, along with many others, as well as the fact that it is *their* interpretation, shows that they are in complete agreement with the thought expressed by the Council. It might be added that Thurian, as the French style shows, is the major author of this work, and that Thurian and Schütz, simply by joint authorship, are evidently in agreement.

Granting all this, we may say that to Thurian, revelation is the living Word as a Word addressed. Thus revelation is the Word, but under a different aspect.

[2] RPV, pp. 56-57; Thurian, "Le concile de Chalcédoine," p. 8.

Thurian has presented his thoughts on this complex matter in a number of his writings, notably L'unité visible des chrétiens et la tradition (1960) and La parole vivante au concile (1966). His theological reflection on Scripture, tradition, the Word and revelation does not lend itself to a simple synthesis. It is at best confused, often apparently contradictory, but nevertheless extensive and, in the opinion of this writer, valuable.[1]

In order that this rather large amount of material be attacked with reasonable intelligibility, it will be considered within these divisions: first, Thurian's concept of Scripture itself, without specific reference to tradition or the Word; second, Scripture and the Word; third, Scripture, tradition and the Word. This last (Scripture, tradition and the Word), which is the heart of the theology, will be devoted primarily to a painstaking analysis of tradition--as action and as content--and the consideration of some difficulties that arise from this analysis. A brief consideration of the apostolic tradition and of ecclesiastical traditions will bring this part of the chapter to a conclusion.

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[1] We might mention here some other worthwhile contributions to the Scripture-tradition debate; for example, among Catholic scholars, George H. Tavard, Holy Writ or Holy Church: The Crisis of the Protestant Reformation (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1959) and P. Joseph Cahill, "Scripture, Tradition, and Unity," Catholic Biblical Quarterly, XXVII (1965), pp. 315-35; among Reformed scholars, Eric Dean, "The Relation between Scripture and Tradition: Theoretical Statements by Calvin and Barth," Encounter, XXII (1962), pp. 277-91; Kristen Ejner Skydsgaard, "Scripture and Tradition: Remarks on the Problem of Tradition in Theology Today," Scottish Journal of Theology, IX (1956), pp. 337-58; and Idem, "Tradition and God's Word," Studia Theologica, XIX (1965), pp. 221-37.

The Holy Scripture in the Church

The Holy Scripture is the place of truth in the Church: "It is the sure channel which brings the truth in its original fullness from Christ, Word of God incarnate, Wellspring of revelation, to the church and to the Christian enlightened by the Holy Spirit."[1] And this truth in the Scriptures continues now in the Church, pertinent and efficacious. The Scripture must be read and explained by the Church.[2] But this reading and explanation must be truly ecumenical: a reading by the universal communion of all churches, of all places and all times, assisted by the Holy Spirit, and with the intention of transmitting the Gospel to men of the present day.[3] Only this "ecumenical reading" of the Scriptures can lead us to the fullness of God's Word.[4] The ecumenical reading of the Scriptures by the Church is defined directly as tradition by Thurian.[5]

With this meaning of tradition, Thurian again is located firmly within Reformed theology. Calvin was concerned that there be not solely a private interpretation of Scripture, but also a public testing of doctrine. A public agreement by the whole Church did not mean a "consensus"; for this is exactly what Calvin opposed in the Roman Church. Rather, it was to be the tradition of the Church that guided this test of doctrine.[1] Barth also maintained that Scriptures can only be read in the context of the Church, for the message of Scripture is not fixed, inflexible, self-contained.[2] And finally, the modern Lutheran scholar, Skydsgaard, says that

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[1] LTM, p. 8.

[2] Thurian, "Spiritualité protestante," p. 376.

[3] *Ibid.*; VUT, p. 107.

[4] VUT, p. 12. A fuller exposition of the meaning, implications, and problems of the "ecumenical reading" of Scripture has been given above, pp. 64-67.

[5] VUT, pp. 129-30.

> the Bible requires to be read and heard in the Church. . . it should be heard as a public act of the Church in the midst of the world for which its message is meant. In other words its voice should sound freely within tradition, so that true tradition is preserved and does not go astray.[3]

Sola Scriptura

> It is plain to be seen that the long-standing attitude of Protestant apologetics no longer holds--namely, that the Church must base the whole of its teaching on the Bible alone. . . . This position, which was that neither of the Reformers nor of the theologians of the seventeenth century, but appeared with various spiritual movements in the nineteenth century, is today entirely out of date.[4]

The Reformers certainly did not hold to Scripture as an authority divorced from the Church. The polemical climate and enthusiasm of the age often gave free rein to zealous and apparently one-sided statements. Nor is a strict sola scriptura adhered to, as Thurian has noted above, by modern Protestant thinkers.[5] Sola scriptura has faded, or rather has been surpassed, along with other "traditional" battle-cries--all products of centuries of non-communication, sketchy knowledge, and deep needs of self-justification. Among these rigid positions we may mention salvation by faith alone (in its older form), the collegiate ministry alone, the unique sacrifice of the cross (as opposed to any sacrifice notion in the Eucharist), the pope acting as God, the Roman Church versus heretics and schismatics, etc.[1]

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[1] Dean, "Statements by Calvin and Barth," pp. 277-81.

[2] Ibid., p. 287.

[3] Skydsgaard, "Tradition and God's Word," pp. 234-35. See also Skydsgaard's article, "Scripture and Tradition," p. 356.

[4] VUT, pp. 53-54.

[5] For example, see Tavard's excellent treatment of the climate of the age and the different currents that it produced: Holy Writ or Holy Church, pp. 12-191.

Therefore, we cannot accuse Thurian of holding a strict doctrine of Scripture alone, above all in the light of his own words quoted above. However, in the course of his other writings he says quite clearly that Scripture alone has sole authority; it alone is normative matter of Christian life and faith.[2]

How is this apparent contradiction to be explained? It is necessary to see these statements in a larger context. That sola scriptura as a Protestant apologetic is entirely out of date must be seen in the setting of the modern concern for the relation between Scripture and tradition. The presence of this living tradition is assumed and contained in the statement that the ecumenical reading of Scripture will recognize that Scripture as sole authority. Moreover, "the main thrust of Catholic belief and theology affirms one source of revelation, that is, Scripture as it is interpreted in the

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[1] RPV, pp. 70-71.

[2] Thurian, "Pastorale liturgique," p. 127.

Church.[1]

Presumably, to return to Thurian, Scripture as normative for Christian life and faith is Scripture as a source of inspiration and as the nucleus of the liturgical life of the Church. However, the matter does still seem hazy: there is here perhaps more confusion than paradox and difference of concept. _Sola scriptura_, like the Catholic "two-source theory," must fall before ecumenical progress, but the abandonment is too difficult, apparently, to be quite well-defined and complete.

Scripture and the Word of God

The Lord Jesus Christ founded the Church, a living community. The Church is constantly re-formed and re-structured by the living Word of God. How is this Word of God found in the Church? Is it simply identical to the Scriptures, or contained therein, or found only in their interpretation? Thurian's thoughts on this problem are far from immediately clear. He states that the Word is _contained in_ the Scriptures,[2] _present in_ and _embodied in_ the Scriptures,[3] and that it _resounds throughout_ the Scriptures.[4]

Conversely, the Word seems to _be_ the Scriptures: "The Scriptures were never to be transmitted solely as a document, but as a Word read and preached in the Church--therefore interpreted."[1] And, ". . . we should go higher and further than Scripture and Tradition until we come to the Gospel of Christ himself, the Word of God of which they are the first and original forms, the first and primitive manifestations in the Church. . . ."[2]

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[1] Cahill, "Scripture, Tradition, and Unity," p. 327.

[2] LTM, pp. 3, 9; VUT, p. 11.

[3] VUT, p. 9; RPV, p. 71.

[4] Thurian, "Le concile de Chalcédoine," p. 50.

There are several keys to this difficulty. First of all, it must be remembered that the Word of God is always dynamic, always alive, in the thought of Thurian. It is inconceivable that the Word is simply a book written centuries ago. Then too, his mention of the canon as decided by the Church would evidently preclude this conclusion. The Word of God in the Church today is identical to the Scripture only insofar as we understand this to mean the Scriptures as read, as used, as interpreted; the Scriptures as preached and prayed. In this manner there is a dynamic and living phenomenon, and a phenomenon by its very nature inseparable from tradition: this can truly be the vivifying Word of God. If this concept is grasped, then the Word can truly be said, also, to be embodied in the Scriptures, taking the word most literally: here and now the Word takes its form, its existence, its flesh, as it were, from the proclamation and interpretation of the Scriptures in the Church.

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[1] VUT, p. 70.

[2] RPV, p. 42. The explanation given above, page 110, note 1, applies here also. See also LTM, p. 16. No development of his ideas away from one position or toward another can be posited here. Note that the Word as Scripture is found in writings from 1960, 1964, and 1966; that the Word is Scripture is found in the same years and books.

To be sure, even the passages where Thurian says that the Word is contained in the Scripture can be see, when in fuller context, to present no contradiction. For example,

> The Church receives the Word of God that reforms it continually within the perpetual divine institution. It receives the word of God contained in holy scripture in the act of proclaiming the word in its liturgy and its preaching, in studying the word and in teaching it.[1]

But there is even a deeper level. For the Word is Christ. Thurian learns from Luther here: "When Luther speaks of the Word of God, therefore, he means, on the one hand, the Law as interpreted by Christ, and on the other, the Gospel as constituted by Christ, who is Himself the Word."[2] Thus the Word, to Luther and to Thurian, is always fundamentally Christ; the creaturely words are the vehicle and media of the Divine Word.[3] The Word is the presence of the Triune God among us. ". . . if the Word of God is directly identified with the words of the Bible an unfortunate confusion, takes place by which a doctrine or a book is exalted to the Word of God.[4]

A fine summary of the mutual relationship of Word to Scripture is found in Visible Unity and Tradition:

The Gospel of the Apostles, inspired by the Holy Spirit,

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[1] LTM, p. 9. italics mine.

[2] Philip S. Watson, Let God be God! An Interpretation of the Theology of Martin Luther (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1947), p. 151. Watson has a fine section explaining most thoroughly Luther's doctrine of the Word: pp. 149-89.

[3] Ibid., p. 152.

[4] Skydsgaard, "Tradition and God's Word," p. 224. [the comma after confusion is present in the article]

> remains alive in the Church. . . . The Gospel is not simply a book to be republished, but a living Word, a Sacred Scripture to be explained within the communion of the Church. . . .[1]

Scripture, Tradition, and the Word

A clear understanding of tradition is the key to a comprehension of the interrelationships among Scripture, tradition, and the Word. Tradition may be understood as a dynamic process or action, or as a body of content. Both meanings are assumed by Thurian.

Tradition as Transmitter or Act

As process or act, tradition is a transmitter of the Word of God in the Church. But tradition is not alone in this role; it acts conjointly with Scripture. How Scripture can transmit the Word has already been noted. Thurian clarifies the joint role of Scripture and tradition: "[It is] Scripture conjointly with Tradition, understood, interpreted, explicitated, confirmed by Tradition which faithfully transmits the Word of God in the Church."[2] Thus the balance must be kept: neither Scripture alone, isolated, nor tradition as a quantitative addition to Scripture, nor even Scripture and tradition juxtaposed, but the two _conjointly_ are the _one_ transmitter of the Word.[3]

In this position, Thurian finds the support of the Second Vatican Council. The spirit of the Council, in many areas, but chiefly in the exposition of Scripture and tradition, appears as inclusive of historically exclusive positions, appears as an ecumenical going-beyond.[1] Thus one stage of ecumenical development has been passed: a better comprehension of Scripture and tradition as conjoint transmitters of the Word.

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[1] VUT, p. 66. [2] RPV, p. 70. [3] _Ibid_.

If Scripture is to be understood as the living Word of God, it cannot be isolated from the life of the Church.[2] For Christ's own life has been communicated to the Church, along with the fullness of the Spirit, and it is only in the plenitude of life that the Gospel is transmitted.[3] "Now _Tradition is this unfailing life of the Scriptures in the Church_ through the invigoration of the Spirit. Tradition, indeed, is the life of the Church attentive to the Holy Spirit repeating ever afresh the Word of God."[4] Only the Church's reading of the Scriptures (tradition) can lead us into the fullness of God's Word.[5] Therefore, Scripture and tradition are not only profoundly united one to the other, but mutually directed towards the same end: the universal knowledge of the Word of God in the Church, and by her, in the world.[6]

As act, then, tradition is, with Scripture, conjoint transmitter of the Word of God in the Church; it is transmitter because it is actually the life of the Scripture in the Church, the ecumenical reading of Scripture in the Church, directed towards the universal knowledge of the Word.

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[1] _Ibid_., p. 71. For a fuller exposition of Thurian's theme of "going-beyond" (_dépassement_), see below, pp. 248-49.

[2] _Ibid_., p. 45.

[3] VUT, p. 75.

[4] VUT, p. 11. italics mine.

[5] _Ibid_., p. 12.

[6] RPV, p. 42.

The Living Experience of the Word.-- In the celebration of the liturgy, the Church makes a living experience of the Word of God, and this experience is an essential form of tradition.[1] "In the formulas of its official prayer, in the choice of texts and the composition of prayers, the early Church reveals to us its profound understanding of Revelation and transmits to us its faithful interpretation of the Gospel."[2]

Not only is tradition the life of the Word of God in the Church, the experience of the Word, but it is also itself the act by which the Church transmits the Word. Within this action of transmission is the whole of the dogmas, sacraments, and holiness of the Church: the apostolic tradition. This process of transmission includes preaching, liturgy, catechesis, theology, mission, and the witness and life of the Church.[3]

This living transmission--tradition--is a human thing; its life depends on the apostles and their successors, and each apostle proclaimed the truth according to the individuality of his human personality. Yet it remains one and the same Gospel. This one Gospel remains forever alive in the Church, transmitted by the human successors of these apostles.[4]

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[1] _Ibid_., p. 29; LTM, p. 16. This topic is treated fully in Chapter V, _passim_.

[2] VUT, p. 97.

[3] RPV, pp. 30-31; LTM, p. 13.

[4] VUT, pp. 60, 66.

Tradition as Content

The apostolic successors stand also under the judgment of the Word. Their authority depends on their fidelity to this Word. Thus they must constantly refer to the objective data of Scripture; and these data Thurian refers to as the original tradition.[1] So that future generations might not distort these data, it was necessary that the oral apostolic tradition become a written tradition.[2]

Therefore, tradition may also refer to content, to the Gospel as comprehended by the Church. But tradition comprehends far more than just the Scripture; it contains the idea of the sacraments, the creeds, and the dogmas of the first seven ecumenical councils.[3] All this makes up a tangible treasury of the faith, the essential teaching received from Christ.[4]

Tradition, however, adds nothing quantitatively to Scripture.[5] Rather, tradition reflects, in a living manner, that which the inspired writers had recorded of the Word of God in the text of Scripture.[6] Scripture and tradition flow from the Word of God; they are the original forms of it, the first and primitive manifestations of the Word in the Church.[7] Scripture remains a norm for tradition.[8]

Thurian also equates tradition with a catholic understanding of Scripture: "Tradition--a series of different expressions of one and the same truth--constitutes the catholicity of the Church in time."[1]

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[1] *Ibid*., p. 65.
[2] *Ibid*., p. 61.
[3] *Ibid*., pp. 82-83.
[4] *Ibid*, p. 73.
[5] RPV, p. 56.
[6] LTM, p. 13.
[7] RPV, p. 42.
[8] LTM, p. 13; VUT, p. 34.

Thus tradition as content is the entire Gospel message: Gospel in its fullest sense, not only the objective data of the apostolic tradition, but the dogmas, sacraments, and holy life of the Church. Indeed, tradition is the very life of the Church in faith.[2]

Action and Content: An Inclusive Sense

In his commentary on the Second Vatican Council's document on revelation, Thurian notes an inclusive sense of tradition:

> . . . the Tradition, from the apostles and the inspired writers, guards and transmits the apostolic Tradition that it carries; living Tradition in this sense is both apostolic Tradition (the revealed content of what is transmitted) and the process of tradition (the transmission of the revealed content). It is, we think, in this sense that includes content and process that the Council speaks most frequently of tradition.[3]

Tradition is the gift to the Church resulting in this content and in this process.[4]

Finally, the dialogue of the Church with the world can be a form of tradition. This dialogue expands the Church to her catholic dimensions.[5]

The Meaning of Tradition: Some Difficulties

Despite many apparently clear individual statements, the doctrine of tradition as put forth by Max Thurian leaves the reader with uncertainty and confusion. Although it seems clear that tradition is both action and a body of content, just which one is meant is often most obscure. For example, it is not at all clear what tradition is in these statements:

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[1] VUT, p. 93; see also pp. 84-85.

[2] RPV, p. 31; VUT, p. 11.

[3] RPV, p. 30.

[4] LTM, p. 13.

[5] LTM, pp. 16-17.

> . . . the preaching of the successors [of the apostles] is a service of the spoken Word of God which they received from Tradition. . . .[1]
>
> If Scripture is recognized as God's living Word, it cannot be isolated (_sola Scriptura_) from the life of the Church and from Tradition.[2]
>
> Each Church supports the certitude of its teaching through Scripture interpreted in the light of her tradition.[3]
>
> Tradition is necessary in order to understand, explain, and transmit the revelation contained in Scripture.[4]

Examples could be multiplied. To sum up briefly, it has been noted that Thurian defines tradition variously as transmitter of the Word, the life of the Scriptures in the Church, the life of the Church, the ecumenical reading of Scripture in the Church, a living experience of the Word, the act by which the Church transmits the Word, the objective data of the apostolic Church, the entire Gospel message, and the dialogue of the Church with the world.

Doubtless, the only possible course is always to allow for the most inclusive sense: tradition as both action and content. In order to clarify this, one of the quotations above may be analysed: "If Scripture is recognized as God's living Word, it cannot be isolated (_sola Scriptura_) from the life of the Church and from Tradition."[1] Scripture cannot be isolated from the content: the entire Gospel message, the creeds, dogmas, and sacraments of the Church. Nor can it be isolated from its own life in the Church, from its ecumenical reading, from its actual means of transmission to the present day.

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[1] RPV, p. 44. [2] _Ibid_., p. 45. [3] _Ibid_, pp. 46-47.

[4] Thurian, "Un acte oecuménique," p. 8.

On the current controversy concerning the "two-source theory," Thurian is clear: Scripture and tradition are the first forms, and conjoint transmitters of the Word.[2]

The Apostolic Tradition

Christ governed his Church through the college of the apostles. Their word was his Word; in them, the Gospel was preserved in its purity.[3]

> Apostolic Tradition is the whole evangelical message just as the apostles, having received it from Christ and the New Testament authors under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit entrusted it to the Church to be guarded and transmitted until the end of time; this apostolic Tradition is expressed in a special manner in the inspired books of the New Testament, and it is brought into the living Tradition of the Church, in its dogmas, sacraments, and

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[1] RPV, p. 45.

[2] Ibid., pp. 42, 70. See above, p. 118. In an early article ("Développement du dogme," [1947] p. 160), Thurian distinguished between a Reformed doctrine of tradition, which he called a "body of doctrines," and the Roman Catholic emphasis on the spiritual and living tradition in the Church, expressed through the mouth of an infallible pope. This, however, was well before both Vatican Council II and the Montreal Conference on Faith and Order. What is notable about this article is its irenic tone, its sympathy with the Catholic viewpoint (which even then he saw as changing), and in short, its thoroughly ecumenical spirit.

[3] VUT, pp. 58-59.

sanctified life.[1]

The work of the apostles, witnesses to Christ the living Word, is constitutive of the apostolic tradition. This tradition, received into the heart of the Church, is served by the successors of the apostles; so that all post-apostolic writings, in order to be authentically Christian, must reflect this tradition.[2]

It is in this way that the ancient Church recognized in the New Testament, such as we have it today, the collection of inspired books which would become the rule of faith.[3] This choice of books, constituting the canon, has not been imposed suddenly, in clarity, on the Church; it was not the work of one day. Through careful decisions, over a period of time, the community of the Church, under the leadership of the apostles, and inspired by the Holy Spirit, has given the canon to us.[4]

Ecclesiastical Traditions

One place where neither terminology nor denominational disagreement clouds the issue is in the definition of ecclesiastical traditions. These traditions are the forms of expression which the Gospel tradition takes on according to time, place and culture in order better to accomplish its purpose, the communication of the Word of God to men.[1] Ecclesiastical or confessional traditions are important in a search for unity. We must realize that we live in many diverse confessional traditions. Each Christian comes upon Scripture with a formation which he has absorbed and inherited from the tradition in which he was reared. Our task for the future is to learn to accept forms of thought and practices not in our tradition.[2]

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[1] RPV, p. 30. The comments in note 1, page 110 above, apply here also.

[2] RPV, p. 38.

[3] LTM, pp. 4-5. Thurian calls the ultimate decision on the canon infallible (Ibid.)

[4] RPV, p. 38; VUT, p. 11.

Summary

So the Word dwells and lives within the Church; it convokes, governs and judges the Church. And the Church which hears the Word transmits it, faithfully and in its purity, from generation to generation. This Word is preached and interpreted by the Church. Embodied in Scripture, the objective data of revelation, the Word forms the channel and the place of truth.

Scripture, the living Word of God, cannot be isolated from the life of the Church. Tradition is the life of the Scripture in the Church, the transmission of this Gospel, and also the entire content of the Christian Good News.

The three concepts--Word, Scripture, and tradition--are indissolubly united one with the other, and with ministry; and all can be seen only within the great mystery of the Church.

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[1] RPV, p. 31.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 47; Thurian, "La conférence oecuménique de Lund," *VC*, VI (1952), pp. 134-35.

Part II: The Word in the Church

The Word, given, does not change; it remains forever. But the truth dwells within the Church, which is a living, growing community. As time goes by, a fresh look at the truth, a fresh formulation of the truth, may often be necessary. Thus, from time to time, the Church gathers together in ecumenical council.

Ecumenical Councils

Their Convocation and their Task

It is particularly when gathered in council that the Church enjoys the presence of the Holy Spirit.[1] Why is a council convoked? At certain moments in its history, the Church is threatened by false teaching, or it needs once again to bring to light its proclamation of the truth.[2] Frequently, also, the Church feels the need to tighten or secure its unity, or to recover a visible unity which has been lost.[3] Therefore, the Church gathers in council to seek the truth in unity, and through the proclamation of truth, to guard charity among all men.[4]

A council is truly ecumenical only when it involves the whole Church, that is, when there is actual or potential participation of authorized representatives of all baptized persons, and when this council treats of fundamental problems confronting the whole Church.[1]

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[1] VUT, p. 87.

[2] LTM, p. 11.

[3] Thurian, "Unity of the Ministry," Church Quarterly Review, CLXII (July-September, 1961), p. 299; VUT, pp. 91-92.

[4] VUT, p. 30; Thurian, "Le concile de Chalcédoine," p. 51.

The task of the ecumenical council is "to interpret the Scriptures in the form of dogmas universally recognized as corresponding accurately to revealed data."[2] The council seeks fresh formulation of the truth. The truth does not change, but the council must seek contemporaneous expressions of the truth. Thus, "the ecumenical council is the privileged milieu of the church's life in which the universal understanding of the truth is made precise under the guidance of the Holy Spirit."[3]

There is not, in Thurian's concept of a council, a dogmatic development in the sense that the dogmas themselves develop or grow: the truth does not ripen; it is always--and has always been--fully mature. A council reformulates the truth, renders it more explicit or full, expresses its _understanding_ of the Word of God at any given moment. The change and growth and maturing is a function of the people, of the community of the Church, of the language, not of the truth.[4]

Conciliar Faith

If we will have unity in the Church, we must recover conciliar faith. The faith of the councils is a solid and trustworthy starting point, a "rule of faith."[1]

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[1] VUT, pp. 30, 91-92; LTM, p. 11.

[2] VUT, p. 30.

[3] VUT, p. 11.

[4] See especially _ibid_., pp. 82, 92-93; LTM, pp. 11, 15. Cf. Karl Rahner, S.J., "Current Problems in Christology," in _Theological Investigations_, Vol. I: _God, Christ, Mary and Grace_, trans. by Cornelius Ernst, O.P. (Baltimore: Helicon Press, 1961), pp. 149-200.

> Though they do not have the absolute authority of the inspired text of scripture, the creeds and the conciliar texts do have a normative authority, for they state how the universal church, aided by the Holy Spirit, has understood the word of God and has transmitted it to future generations.[2]

Conciliar faith is demanded also by the mission of the Church, for its witness and its proclamation of the Word, and by its pastoral office among its own flock; for the faithful must be taught to preserve the deposit of faith.[3] The truth as expressed in conciliar faith cannot be denied or contradicted, only rendered still more explicit or full by a new conciliar intervention on the part of the Holy Spirit.[4]

The model council is the so-called Council of Jerusalem (Acts 15:1-29), which has left to posterity an evidence of the faithful transmission of the Gospel and an expression of an authentic interpretation of the deposit of faith.[5] If the conciliar faith is essential to the Church, to which councils, specifically, can we turn to discover this faith (outside of this scriptural "council")?

The Orthodox Church recognizes the first seven councils (Nicaea, Constantinople I, Ephesus, Chalcedon, Constantinople II, Constantinople III, and Nicaea II) as ecumenical and therefore authoritative. The Reform, however, recognized only the first four.[1] Thurian is of the opinion that all seven must be accepted. Of the seven, he holds the greatest respect for Nicaea: "In a way, there has been but one council--that of Nicaea--repeated in different ways by the subsequent ones."[2]

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[1] VUT, pp. 28, 29, 33.

[2] LTM, p. 15.

[3] VUT, p. 31.

[4] VUT, p. 82

[5] VUT, p. 81.

In fact, all Christians, Orthodox, Roman Catholic and Reformed, accept the great trinitarian and Christological dogmas of the early councils. But the Church must not impose limits; the conciliar faith deals also with the structure of the Church, episcopal ministry, and liturgical practice. Here also unity can and should be sought.[3]

The fundamental dogmas of conciliar faith cannot be called into question; they have been promulgated with all the authority of the one and universal Church.[4] With this position, the Catholic theologian can firmly agree. It is interesting to note that in a much earlier article, Thurian denied infallibility to the pronouncements of a council. This decision of the Church in council "is not infallible; it is solely the most universal expression of the truth. . . . The council is not more infallible than the Church."[5] Even in more mature works, he holds out the chance of error; an individual Christian, if he is a true prophet, could be right, contrary to an ecumenical council.[1]

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[1] Their authority among Protestants was shaken by the eighteenth century Enlightenment.

[2] VUT, p. 89. [3] *Ibid.*, pp. 34-35. [4] *Ibid.*, p. 29.

[5] Thurian, "Le concile de Chalcédoine," p. 51. See also "Les conséquences du dogme," pp. 110-111.

The Ecumenical Council and the Church Today

There has been a long history indeed from the Second Council of Nicaea to the present day. Is there an ecumenical council in our time, and will there be one in the future?

The Protestant churches stood outside, as observers, of the Second Vatican Council. For Thurian, this gathering was not truly ecumenical.[2] But he has the greatest admiration for its work and mentions it frequently in his writings. The texts of the Second Vatican Council on revelation and on the Church in the modern world are, according to Thurian, its masterpieces.[3] He also has much praise for the *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church*, the *Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity*,[4] and the *Decree on Ecumenism*.[5] The spirit of the Council he describes as that of ecumenical "going-beyond," inclusive of positions historically exclusive.[6] In this Council, the Catholic Church has made decisions of self-reform which have given great joy to Protestants. From the Protestants, the Council has requested pardon, and recognized their churchly reality. The Christian churches are no longer strangers, but brethren.[1]

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[1] VUT, p. 29.

[2] It does not fit his very clear definition.

[3] RPV, p. 9.

[4] Interviews with Max Thurian, at Taizé, December 27 and 28, 1966.

[5] "Vatican II and Ecumenical Dialogue," p. 28.

[6] RPV, pp. 70-71.

To Thurian, the most important ultimate fruit of the Second Vatican Council is unity. He points out two avenues which lead to this unity:

> Everything that is done to make the Catholic Church appear in an attitude of service, everything that underlines the necessity of renouncing human power and that reveals the Church as a servant before her Master, must be said to foster unity.[2]
>
> One of the triumphs of Vatican II will be to have increased the love of the Word of God in the Catholic Church: "a new impetus to her spiritual life may also be expected" and a new impetus to ecumenical life which can lead to the visible unity of all Christians, thanks to "a greater veneration of the Word of God 'which remains forever.'"[3]

The Protestant churches stand within the World Council of Churches. For many, this World Council is now an instrument of the Holy Spirit destined to carry out his divine will for the whole Church and, by and through the Church, for the whole world.[4] The World Council is provisional, but it is a sign of the Church's visible unity. "The World Council, without being an ordinary institution of the Church, has caused the reappearance of a sign of the Church's visible unity: the ministry of catholicity. . . ."[5]

Other federations of churches represent local councils (the Lutheran Federation, Presbyterian Alliance, Pan-Orthodox Synod, etc.). They, along with the Second Vatican Council and the World Council of Churches, are steps towards an ecumenical council of the future. "To the extent, then, that the alliances favor both universal unity and local unity, they may be considered interim forms of the local councils, adapted to present-day divisions, which follow lines of both geography and belief."[1]

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[1] Glynn, "Ecumenism and the Council," pp. 171-72.

[2] Ibid., p. 171.

[3] RPV, p. 79.

[4] Thurian, "L'unité visible," VC, XVI (1962), p. 159.

[5] VUT, p. 25.

But the World Council, like Vatican II, is not truly ecumenical; for a truly ecumenical council of the future must be a meeting of _all_ the churches. It will require the presence of all Christians now separated and desirous of regaining their visible unity.[2] The fact remains that the universal Church has not yet, since the earliest councils, assembled in a _really_ ecumenical council.[3]

A Critique

Perhaps the major criticism which may be offered with regard to Thurian's theology of ecumenical councils is that it has no depth.[4] It is well-stated, it contains many _expected_ ideas, but the treatment does not really come to grips with the essential, and large, problems of the concept of a council.

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[1] _Ibid_., p. 27; see also p. 91.

[2] _Ibid_., p. 91. Thurian hopes, with great optimism, that perhaps within ten years we could have a truly common council, or at least a "pre-council," a truly peaceful dialogue of all Christians (interview with Max Thurian, at Taizé, December 28, 1966).

[3] As implied by statements in VUT, p. 29.

[4] Compare Thurian's treatment, for example, with the brilliant work of Hans Küng, _The Council in Action: Reflections on the Second Vatican Council_, trans. by Cecily Hastings (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1963), pp. 43-66.

For example, who convokes an ecumenical council? Must it be the pope? all the bishops? a head of state? To say merely that the Church "gathers together" in council avoids the issue.

What are the exact criteria of ecumenicity? Thurian demands that to be truly ecumenical, a council must represent the whole Church--all baptized persons--and deal with fundamental problems. But has this often, or ever, happened? Is it ever likely to happen? Happily, there is an escape clause: there must be actual or potential representation of all the baptized.[1] It is no doubt conceivable that a future council could at least be open to all Christians.

Thurian accepts the Orthodox position that there has been no really ecumenical council since the first seven, that therefore Vatican II, for example, was not really ecumenical, despite its orientation and the presence of observers. It is most interesting that he does not adhere to the specifically Protestant view that only the first four were truly ecumenical. If he accepts seven, one wonders why the line is drawn precisely there. Are there cogent reasons? Is this position not subject to change? But he gives no reasons. In the Protestant tradition, he looks forward towards the truly ecumenical council of the future.

The conciliar faith cannot be questioned or contradicted; it is the locus of the understanding of the one truth in a given age. Yet, the councils are not infallible.[1] Even one man, if a true prophet, can be right versus an ecumenical council. But surely one particular church may not change conciliar faith. And it must be borne in mind that conciliar faith is the faith of only the first seven (or, for most Protestants, the first four) councils. All of this seems completely contradictory, or at best confused. We may say that first of all, it is contradictory. Then, too, Thurian is totally a man of the Reform. It is inconceivable to the Reformed tradition that any assembly of men, no matter how ordained or how exalted, should not stand under the judgment of the Word of God, or should in any way restrict the freedom of God. So we cannot change or challenge the conciliar faith; it is normative. But it may be wrong, for God may still speak and judge (through, perhaps, a prophet).

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[1] VUT, pp. 30, 91-92.

Therefore, in Thurian's theology of an ecumenical council, two things must be kept in mind: that he is a Protestant totally within the Protestant tradition, and that he does not really say, or perhaps even know, exactly what, in its essence, an ecumenical council is.

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[1] For Calvin, the councils were fallible simply because they were made up of men, to whom infallibility is certainly not guaranteed. However, he venerated the great councils and desired that they be honored by all. In short, their decisions must always be weighed against the Word. Thus Thurian does not really follow Calvin in maintaining that conciliar faith cannot be questioned or contradicted. Calvin denies it to be "always the case that an interpretation of Scripture adopted by vote of a council is true and certain." (ICR, IV. ix.12). See the whole of chapter ix of the Institutes for Calvin's thought on councils. See also Thurian, "Le concile de Chalcédoine," p. 52. Cf. Rahner, God, Christ, Mary, pp. 149-200.

The Word of the Church:
Doctrine and Theology

The conciliar faith, if it be limited to a product of the early centuries, is a child of very different conditions and circumstances. The dogmas must of course be handed on. We, the Church, are the place of the repetition of dogmas.[1] But dogmas may not be simply repeated indefinitely.[2] Rather, the Church must strive to re-think the expression of its dogmas, to revivify its thought and its language from the very sources of faith.[3]

The Development of Dogma

The truth, given once and for all, does not change, but it must take on contemporaneous expression. Thus there has been, in this sense only, dogmatic development: what has been defined may expand, develop, become more explicit and hence more absolute, closer to the thought of God.[4] What is found in the sources of faith--Scripture, apostolic tradition, the living liturgy--is constantly more profoundly grasped in the confrontation by the Church's ministry with the conditions of history at any given time.[5] "Not that truth changes, but its implications are better and better realized by virtue of the ever-fresh reading of the Scriptures accomplished by the ecumenical Church in its vital contacts with the modern world."[1]

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[1] Thurian, "Développement du dogme," p. 154.

[2] Thurian, "Le concile de Chalcédoine," p. 52.

[3] Thurian, "Walking Together to Christ," p. 133.

[4] VUT, pp. 92-93; 122.

[5] Thurian, "Walking Together to Christ," p. 133; VUT, p. 86.

Development of dogma may be said to be, therefore, in reality a development and growth in the Church's understanding of the truth as she moves through history, tying together the eternal Word and the changing milieu. In this light, Thurian speaks, approvingly, of the Roman Catholic idea of the development of dogma, which is "closely bound to the idea of incarnation in the Church, which, like a true living organism, develops not only in a physical way, but in a psychological way as well, a way of thought."[2]

Theology and the Theologian in the Church

To be sure, each one of the faithful who reads Scripture and bears witness shares in a real way in this universal understanding of doctrine and of the Word of God; each Christian has his own share in the deepening of doctrinal knowledge. But there must be in the Church theologians, who are "especially commissioned to plumb the depths of Scripture in order to bring to light all the aspects of the truth."[3] The theologian knows that his science is not an individual exercise, nor even solely team-work; rather, the Spirit in dialogue with the Church furnishes him with the indispensable elements of his work.[1] The theologian is dependent upon the whole Church and upon his ultimate source, the Word of God.

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[1] VUT, p. 48.

[2] Thurian, "Développement du dogme," p. 151.

[3] LTM, p. 11.

> The only guarantee of truth which can be hoped for by the theologian is his obedience to Holy Scripture, supported and checked by the thought of the whole Church. . . . It is in this ecumenical spirit of obedience to the word of God that we can hope to come closest to the thought of the Lord.[2]

The entire Church, nevertheless, exercises the chief theological role; and this she does by means of her liturgy and prayer, the witness of each one of her members, and the combat and suffering of her faithful.[3]

Thurian defines theology as a science "composed of exegesis and of submission to the faith of the councils."[4] In this light, surely theology can be totally ecumenical. What is required in the search for visible unity is a great doctrinal clear-sightedness. Theology must put aside as finished those things to which all Christians have agreed; all other things must be conquered, one by one.[5]

> It is only in the full awareness of the essential verities of the faith that Christians can go forward in the hope of some day arriving at visible unity in one and the same church; and conversely it is only in great ecumenical openness, in a genuine thirst for charity and unity, that they can remain firm and vital in the faith.[6]

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[1] OB, p. 129.

[2] MrCl, p. 13.

[3] OB, p. 129. Theology, according to Thurian, is essentially doxological (see below, Chapter V, passim).

[4] VUT, p. 32.

[5] Thurian, "La conférence oecuménique de Lund," pp. 134-35.

[6] LTM, pp. vii-viii.

Summary

To understand the Word, to seek truth in unity and charity, the Church from time to time gathers in ecumenical council. The conciliar faith thus formulated is normative for the Church. But the dogmas of councils are not irreformable; they too stand under the judgment of the Word of God.

Since the first seven great councils, there has not been a truly ecumenical council, representing at least potentially all the baptized, although such important and fruitful gatherings as the Second Vatican Council and the World Council of Churches represent steps towards a really ecumenical council of the future.

Does the doctrine of the Church develop? The truth remains the same, but the Church's understanding of the truth changes and grows as she moves through history, so that a continually fresh reformulation is sought. Certainly, this is chiefly the duty of the theologians, but every Christian shares in a real way in the deepening of doctrinal knowledge.

And thus the Word of God, given to the Church, becomes, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the word of the Church: in the Church it finds its life until the end of the ages.

CHAPTER V

THE PRAYER OF THE CHURCH: THE EUCHARIST AND THE SACRAMENTS

Introduction: The Prayer of the Church

All things in the Christian speak of the glory of God. The entire being of the Christian--all of his life and all of his work--must be a perpetual thanksgiving to God.[1] The life of prayer and thanksgiving is communitarian first of all: the Christian prays in, with, and through the Church.[2] Thus it is impossible to present a theology of the Church, a truly integral ecclesiology, without a consideration of prayer--the prayer of the Church. The Church receives present blessings only by living in perpetual thanksgiving to God for his marvellous acts of the past.[3]

The close relationship of prayer to unity is also most apparent.

> Surely there are many roads to unity, but one of them is within reach of every Christian. It is the one called forth. . . by the Apostle: the way of spiritual emulation. This is an action, a struggle, a course which can make real our unity: engagement in spiritual discipline, in Christian asceticism, in the combat of prayer.[4]

This chapter, then, is concerned with the prayer of the Church. And the true prayer of the Church is Christ himself.[1] The unique sacrifice of Christ, offered in the Church through the power of the Holy Spirit, is the prayer of the Church, and of the Christian, par excellence. We must therefore answer, from Max Thurian's thought, the questions: What is the liturgy? What is the Eucharist? How is the liturgy, particularly the Eucharist, expressive and constitutive of the Church herself?

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[1] Thurian, "L'anthropologie réformée," p. 52.

[2] Thurian, "Spiritualité protestante," p. 382.

[3] InET, p. 17.

[4] HMV, p. 35.

The ministry of the Church is a ministry of Word and sacrament. Both Word and sacrament find their fount and summit in the Eucharist. But the other sacramental actions of Christ in the Church must be studied also. This chapter will include, therefore, a study of the sacraments of healing and absolution.[2]

An exhaustive treatment of sacramental theology has no place within a study of ecclesiology. There are depths and problems proper to each sacrament which cannot be examined here. Thurian's theology of the sacraments is presented only insofar as it is ecclesial; this is clearly but one facet of the total sacramental corpus. What has been here attempted, therefore, and what will be done with regard to other sacraments in the following chapters, is to give a basic definition or specification of characteristics which identify and establish the sacrament, and to give the course of the sacrament within the life and ministry of the Church. Such few problems as may arise from these considerations are then examined.

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[1] InET, p. 19.

[2] Baptism and confirmation, along with marriage and celibacy (neither of which latter Thurian considers to be a sacrament) will be treated in Chapter VI, "The Ministry of the Church to the World." The reasons for this grouping will be made clear in that chapter; it might be mentioned that these three rites plus celibacy are considered as consecration of the Christian, principally of the layman, for his mission to the world. Holy orders will form a fundamental section of Chapter VII, "Ministry in the Church for the Church."

The Liturgy

In his first published book (1946) Thurian defines the liturgy as "*the collection of words--in formulas or spontaneous--of sacraments, and of symbols which manifests the Incarnation of Christ in the Church and which assembles the faithful in one unique body in order to hear, to commune, to adore*."[1]

Eighteen years later, he states that liturgy is "the act of the risen and glorified Christ in his Church."[2] His growth is evident here, not only in the transference from the more static "collection" to the dynamic act, from the abstract thing to the living action of a living Christ, but also in his abandonment of attempts at inclusive definitions. Many times, it is true, he states a characteristic of liturgy, or a value or fruit of liturgy, but nowhere else does he attempt a formal (note the italics in the definition of liturgy above) and final definition. This of course is true of all subjects which he handles; we have seen this clearly in an attempt to discover his definition of the Church.

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[1] JCT, p. 18.

[2] Glynn, "Ecumenism and the Council," p. 175.

Thurian's mature concept of liturgy, therefore, is that of an action in and by the Church. First of all, it is an action of Jesus Christ. And, very important, it is an action of the whole people of God; it is the prayer of the entire Christian community, the community which is seeking through the liturgy to renew its life in the world.[1] Liturgy is thus the action which manifests the royal priesthood of the people of God. The whole Body of Christ is joined in adoration and intercession; the whole people have free access to the Father. There is no mediation in Christian worship as in the Old Testament; Jesus is the only Mediator.[2]

The Problem of Mediation

At once a problem seems to arise for the Catholic theologian. Surely the Catholic accepts the mediating office of the priest in his sacramental ministry, while Thurian, as a Protestant, apparently does not. This is not by any means a new hurdle in ecumenical dialogue. Thurian states: "If there is a mediation in Christian worship, it is the mediation of ministers as instruments of Christ in order to proclaim the Word of God and to manifest his presence and his work in the sacraments."[3] The Catholic does believe that the minister is an instrument of Christ, who is the one Mediator, the perfect meeting of God and man. Perhaps there is a depth in the Catholic doctrine which is missing here: the minister actually stands as Christ in preaching the Word and administering the sacraments; but surely the quotation above, and Thurian's ideas as expounded throughout his work, are patient of this deeper interpretation.

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[1] InET, pp. 1-2.

[2] Thurian, "The Present Aims of the Liturgical Movement," Studia Liturgica, III, No. 2 (Autumn, 1964), p. 112; InET, p. 4; Thurian, "Liturgie et actualité," p. 22.

[3] Thurian, "Liturgie et actualité," p. 22. See also InET, p. 5.

Nor does the Catholic Church deny free access to the throne of grace of all Christians. If the minister (priest) mediates for the people before God, it is because again he is the instrument of Christ, of his Body which is the Church. Herein lies the real division between Catholic and Protestant. For to the Protestant, ministry is sent to represent Christ, but it does not and cannot represent the people, for only Christ can take man's place and act for man before the Father.[1] In sum, the minister, for the Catholic, mediates as Christ; for the Protestant, the minister mediates only from Christ (to men). Thurian is not explicit on this latter distinction, but he appears to be in harmony with Reformation thought.

Further Characteristics of Liturgy

The primary effect of liturgy is to make the Church become a Body, the Body of Christ. And, conversely, the life of this Body is the liturgy, without which the Body cannot exist in this world.[2] Not only does liturgy bring life to the Church, it actually expresses the Church in expressing the local congregation.[1]

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[1] T. F. Torrance, Theology in Reconstruction (London: SCM Press, Ltd., 1965), p. 176. See also EM, I, 58-59.

[2] JCT, p. 13; Thurian, "Liturgie et actualité," p. 24.

The liturgy of the Church is not unallied to its dogmatic expression of truth. True Christian worship is addressed to a Triune God; it presumes the affirmation of faith in Jesus Christ, true God and true man; it has its foundation in the mystery of Redemption, in the unique Sacrifice-Resurrection-Ascension of Christ.[2] Moreover, the liturgy must be really universal, really catholic, with the fullness of faith and adoration inherited from the early Church.[3] Thus,

> the only liturgy admissable is a liturgy whose theological significance is clearly explicit, which expresses genuine sacramental life, which links the local congregation with the Church of all times and places, and which builds up a holy people so as to arm it for its presence and its mission in the world through worship and intercession.[4]

Liturgy in the Life of the Church

The liturgical movement has been an important phenomenon in the contemporary life of the Church. The first stages of this movement, under the inspiration of Solesmes and the early leaders in liturgical restoration, were aesthetic. But the present stage is communal. "In this stage the ecumenical movement exercises a strong influence on the liturgical movement in its rediscovery of the catholicity of the Church in its two aspects of universality and of community."[5] Thus the liturgical renewal has re-established the conception and the practice of worship as the action of all the people of God, of the whole Christian community.[1]

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[1] InET, p. 3.

[2] Thurian, "Liturgie et actualité," p. 19.

[3] VUT, p. 98.

[4] O'Shea, "The Community of Taizé," p. 108.

[5] *Ibid*.

The liturgy gives life to the Church in many ways. In the liturgy, the Church makes a living experience of the Word of God by which she is nourished. Moreover, the doctrine of the Church is made alive in liturgical celebration. It is Thurian's contention, as has been seen, that theology is essentially doxological, that truth is proclaimed in the very process of the communal prayer and praise.[2] And the Church not only proclaims in the liturgy, but she also catechises: "The privileged place of doctrinal and moral instruction is the liturgy itself, and particularly the liturgy of the Lord's Supper."[3]

Not only does the liturgy give life to the Church, but it receives its life from the same Church; "for a liturgy does not create itself; it springs forth from an experience of the Church hearing the Word of God."[4] Thus liturgy has its own history, its own tradition, its own structures. The tradition of liturgical prayer goes back to the apostles.[5] This liturgy cannot pretend to be immediately accessible to the man in the street. A formation for each Christian, biblical and catechetical, is essential. For a liturgy reduced to instantaneous comprehension by all would of necessity be empty of biblical and traditional substance and of rich symbolism, and would soon be impoverished and out of date.[1]

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[1] Thurian, "Liturgie et actualité," p. 21.

[2] VUT, pp. 96-97; LTM, p. 16.

[3] CON, p. 82. See also VUT, p. 73.

[4] Thurian, "Le canon romain," VC, XXII, No. 85 (1968), p. 85.

[5] OB, p. 135.

The liturgical renewal has focused attention on the essential ecumenical character of worship. Liturgy ought to unite us to the Church of all times and of all places, with the Church triumphant in heaven as well as all the Church on earth and the Church of the apostles. As liturgy expresses and constitutes the Church, so the liturgy can create an ecumenical unity of churches everywhere, "in the diversity of rites which manifest the integration of fundamental structures into diverse cultures."[2] Worship is ecumenical primarily because it is deeply communal.[3]

The life of the Church leads ultimately to the Kingdom of God; for the Church is not yet the Kingdom.[4] The Church, now divided, awaits the Kingdom of God at the Parousia; and the liturgy, which is the life of the Church, is the anticipation of the Kingdom.[5]

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[1] Thurian, "Liturgie et actualité," p. 20. This does not mean that liturgy must, on the other hand, appeal only to the esoteric or arcane. A healthy balance must be struck: traditional structures adapted completely to diverse cultures.

[2] Ibid., p. 22. See also Thurian, "La vie liturgique," p. 134.

[3] Thurian, "Present Aims," p. 112.

[4] See above, pp. 79-80.

[5] InET, p. 8. See also Thurian, "La vie liturgique," p. 134.

A Note on Images

The worshipper and visitor to Taizé is struck by the use of icons in the church, a practice virtually unknown in the Reformed tradition--above all in America--and definitely not in the spirit of Calvin. But to Thurian, the use of images is not only lawful but deeply significant in the liturgy. The use of images is a consequence of the solidification of Christological doctrine at the early councils, particularly that of Nicaea. Their use makes clear that the Incarnation has the power to re-establish the whole of creation to its liturgical function of adoration of the Creator.[1] The artist is "the instrument whereby the truth incarnate in Jesus Christ comes into contact with the material world of forms, colors, and sounds."[2] Evidently, therefore, Thurian sees no difference among the uses of whatever art forms in worship. His perception penetrates the artificial wall that has barred painting and sculpture while encouraging music, architecture, and poetry.

His theology of images is founded on the Incarnation. But he also sees them as signs among us of the coming Kingdom: "Images symbolize the fact that the whole of creation, matter included, can be penetrated by Christ and can become signs of the presence of the Kingdom of God in our world: can cast a reflection of the eternal light."[3]

Surely, there are subtle differences between the Catholic idea of images and Thurian's ideas here expressed. However, most of this difference of viewpoint can be said to be the result of totally different cultural milieux and of apologetic forces at work on both sides. Basically, the Catholic theologian could not agree more with Thurian's ideas, ideas which, if well absorbed, could do much to correct and prevent popular abuses of liturgical images and their meaning in Catholic culture.

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[1] VUT, p. 91. [2] *Ibid*., p. 99. [3] *Ibid*., p. 100.

The Eucharist

The liturgical action of the Church par excellence is of course the Eucharist. Thurian presents many facets of this action rather than a precise definition.

Primarily, the Eucharist is an action, not a thing; it is the action of Christ in his Church.[1] But in the Eucharistic action, Christ is not alone before the Father; "He carries with Him the whole Church, which is His body, in His act of praise and in His prayer. Thus the whole of the new Israel is brought before the attention of the Father in the Eucharist."[2]

The Eucharist is a banquet where Christ offers to us his Body and Blood under the signs of bread and wine.[3] It is a presentation before God,[4] a presentation by Christ of his once-and-for-all sacrifice on Calvary, which in the Eucharist is sacramentally actualized.[1] Thus, the Eucharist is a sacrificial memorial.[2] In the Eucharist, the total mystery of Christ is made actual here and now for us in the Church.[3] Through this sacrament we share in the sacrificial and heavenly ministry of Christ, since the action is an action, as we have seen, of the whole Church his Body.[4]

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[1] EM, I, 15. [2] Ibid., p. 59; HMV, p. 74.

[3] OB, p. 139.

[4] E. L. Mascall, "The Eucharistic Sacrifice," Church Quarterly Review, CLXII (July-September, 1961), p. 279.

Further, the Eucharistic memorial is a thanksgiving and intercession of the Church; through the Eucharist, the Church is united to the heavenly intercession of Christ. "The Church prays to the Father on behalf of all men, for the remission of their sins, for their salvation and happiness, and pleads for the glorious manifestation of the Kingdom. . . ."[5] And the Eucharist also is, therefore, an eschatological sign, an anticipation of the Kingdom.[6]

Although the Eucharist is a fruit of the Word of Christ, this Word does not produce its effect solely by recitation; there is no magical formula which will make the Eucharist. Rather, the Holy Spirit gives life to that Word. Without the Spirit, active within the Church, the Word is dead. In the

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[1] Thurian, "Le canon romain," p. 66.

[2] RPV, p. 71. The entire two-volume EM is a detailed exposition of the Eucharist as memorial, a theological presentation which is outside the scope of this study.

[3] OB, p. 22. See also Boere, "Eucharist and Lord's Supper," p. 93.

[4] Thurian, "Intercommunion," VC, XVII (1963), p. 204.

[5] EM, II, 106. See also OB, p. 21.

[6] Thurian, "Intercommunion," VC, XVII (1963), p. 204.

Alexandrian tradition, for example, the epiclesis, the invocation of the Holy Spirit, immediately precedes Christ's words of institution, uniting the work of the Spirit and the work of Christ.[1] The Word and Spirit are united only in the Church; so the Eucharist must be offered only within the Church. "A true celebration of the Eucharist is a celebration in the Holy Spirit and in the Church with the Word of Christ."[2]

The doctrine of the Eucharist set forth in the documents of the Second Vatican Council is in harmony with the ideas of Thurian. In this very fundamental matter, then, of the essence and meaning of the Eucharist, there is agreement, a surpassing of opposition, an openness to the other.[3]

The Eucharist in the Church

If the Church makes the Eucharist, the Eucharist makes the Church.[4] The Eucharist gathers the community together and gives it its shape; it builds the Church up in unity.[5] It literally constitutes the Church as Church.[6]

The Eucharist nourishes the Church; the Eucharistic body feeds the ecclesial body.[1] Thus the members of Christ's Body are strengthened in their attachment to Christ and to the Church, and their lives of consecration are deepened.[2]

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[1] InET, p. 18.

[2] EM, II, 83.

[3] Paupert, Taizé et l'Eglise, p. 231. See also Albert Schlitzer, "A Protestant Ecumenical on the Eucharist," Yearbook of Liturgical Studies, III (1962), p. 133.

[4] EM, II, 124; Thurian, "Joie au ciel, exulte la terre," p. 39.

[5] InET, pp. 17 passim.

[6] Interview with Max Thurian, at Taizé, December 28, 1966.

In the liturgical action of the Eucharist, the Christian receives his God, but also he receives his brothers in faith. Thus the Eucharist brings about, based on the fundamental union of each to Christ, a union with one another: a close and living communion of each with the whole Church.[3]

> The Eucharist unifies and joins together the members of the Body of Christ; those who have been baptized are joined together in unity and can but seek the deepening, extension and fulfillment of their unity. As the sacrament of unity, the Eucharist is the sacrament of charity . . . . In the life of a local community, the Eucharist is the place where the Church is built up and deepened in charity. That Church which celebrates the Eucharist frequently beholds Christ, through the Eucharist, developing His charity, His unity, and making His word and His life effective in the world.[4]

The Celebration of the Eucharist

It is Thurian's firm belief that each Sunday worship should be a liturgy of the Word and of the Eucharist with communion of all the faithful.[5] And the presence of all the faithful is necessary. For a genuinely sacramental celebration of the Eucharist, the presence and active participation of the ecclesial community is indispensible.[1] It goes without saying that the ordained ministers are also essential to the celebration, for the ecclesial community is not legitimately assembled except in the presence of the Episcopos and Presbyterium, or in communion with them. This assembly occurs in its most perfect form around the Eucharistic table.[2] The minister who celebrates the Eucharist, who is a sign of Christ in the midst of the assembly, has the task of presenting the memorial of Christ and invoking the Holy Spirit in order that God may actualize the mystery of redemption and give himself to the Church.[3]

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[1] LTM, p. 63; InET, p. 14.

[2] Thurian, "Situation du sacerdoce," p. 264.

[3] Boere, "Eucharist and Lord's Supper," p. 93; Thurian, "La vie liturgique," p. 133.

[4] EM, II, 124. Consideration of the Eucharist cannot, of course, be separated from a consideration of unity. However, following the general plan of this study, the ecumenical aspects of the Eucharist will be treated fully in Chapter VIII, "The Ecumenical Dimension."

[5] Thurian, "Liturgie et actualité," p. 21.

The Presence of the Faithful

If one or the other element (ordained minister and assembly of the faithful) is missing, an obstacle to unity and intercommunion is created. There are, of course, churches who practice an "open" celebration, who accept celebration by a layman or by a woman. Thurian, as usual most irenic, does not condemn this (indeed, it is not uncommon in the Reformed tradition); he merely poses some serious and disturbing questions to which these churches should listen:

a) Have you a doctrine of the Real Presence clear

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[1] Heijke, Ecumenical Light, p. 182. Heijke is here presenting the thought of Taizé and therefore, presumably, of Thurian. He refers to InET as his authority.

[2] Thurian, "L'organisation du ministère," pp. 33-34.

[3] InET, p. 3. See also Poulin, "The Protestant Monks," p. 31.

> enough so that others may take your sacraments seriously?
>
> . . . .
>
> c) Is your doctrine of ministry sufficiently consistent in order to encourage your Catholic brothers to make progress on the road to intercommunion?
>
> d) How is it possible for Churches who are in communion one with the other ([open] intercommunion) to remain separated?[1]

It is, and has been for a long time, the custom in the Roman Catholic Church for the ordained minister, either bishop or priest, to celebrate the Eucharist alone if necessary. The Catholic theology, reflected in law, obviously sees that the Eucharistic celebration is of its very nature communal, an action of the whole Church assembled. Thus the Mass in the presence of the people is always preferred; and even when the people cannot be assembled, at least an acolyte, standing in their place, should assist at the celebration. However, the Eucharist may, in fact, be celebrated by the minister alone.[2] This, Thurian and the Reformed tradition would not admit. Clearly, this is a difference. Even though in practice and law, the Catholic custom (which seems to be veering more and more to communal celebration only) can progressively be made one with the Reformed custom, nevertheless, the deeper theological rift remains: in the Reformed Church (and in Thurian's theology) there simply is no Eucharist if a minister celebrates alone.[1]

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[1] Thurian, "Intercommunion," VC, XVII (1963), p. 208.

[2] Joseph Wuest, C.SS.R., _Matters Liturgical_ (_Collectio Rerum Liturgicarum_, trans. by Rev. Thomas W. Mullaney, C.SS.R.; ed. by Rev. William T. Barry, C.SS.R. (9th ed.; New York: Frederick Pustet Company, Inc., 1956), pp. 335-37. The reference is to Canon 813.1 and _Cong_. _Sacr_., Instruction of October 1, 1949, _ad_ III, n. 2.

Two Problems: Sacrifice and the Real Presence

From an ecumenical point of view, the Eucharist poses two more problems: In what sense is the Eucharist a sacrifice? And in what sense is Christ present in the Eucharist?[2] Between Thurian and Catholic theology, there is no essential disagreement here. To him, the Eucharist is a sacrifice. He gives three reasons why this is so: (1) In the Eucharist is the sacramental presence of the sacrifice of the Cross, by the power of the Holy Spirit and the Word, and the presentation of the sacrifice of the Son through the Church to the Father; (2) the Church participates in this intercession of the Son; and (3) there is the offering of the Church, made at the same time to the Father, united to the sacrifice and intercession of the Son.[3]

He is equally definite on the Real Presence: "The

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[1] The deeper problems connected with validity and liceity of the sacraments, and the more obvious question of the validity of orders and ministry in the Reformed churches, are not within the scope of this study of ecclesiology. In the chapter on ministry in the Church (Chapter VII), Thurian's theology of ministry will be presented fully, but viewpoints concerning the validity or orders will not be brought in. The reader may assume either that the orders (and sacraments) are valid (and/or lawful), or that they are invalid. Neither assumption should change the inner cohesion of the treatment nor affect its interrelationships within the study as a whole.

[2] Thurian, "Joie au ciel, exulte la terre," p. 38; InET, p. 23.

[3] Thurian, "Joie au ciel, exulte la terre," p. 37 (paraphrased).

Body and Blood of Christ, all his humanity and his divinity, are truly, really, and substantially present in the Eucharist."[1] Unlike the theologians, both past and present, who have written literally hundreds of thousands of pages in explanation of this Presence, Thurian is content to recognize that it is a mystery which will never be possible for the Church to sound to its depths. She is able only to present it as an undoubted fact. One must keep balance, however, and defend the mystery from either minimalism or exaggeration, from either disembodied spiritualism or carnal magic.[2]

There are indeed many churches and many theologians, including those of the Reformed Church, who would disagree on the question of Real Presence, and many more on sacrifice. The solution of these two problems would be a great leap forward in the ecumenical movement. Between Thurian and the Catholic ideas, however, there is no essential disagreement.

Thurian's theology of the Eucharist both comes from his life and reflects it, within the Community of Taizé. To him, the daily celebration of the Eucharistic liturgy is the principal and most important work of the Community. His life and work come from this center, "around the altar, with a faith in the Real Presence, offering the praise and suffering of the Church, and waiting for the Kingdom."[1]

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[1] Ibid., p. 38. See above, p. 17.

[2] OB, p. 38. See also Thurian, "Joie au ciel, exulte la terre," pp. 38ff. In realization of this theology of belief, awe, and yet incomprehension, the consecrated elements are treated with great reverence at Taizé. They are consumed after the celebration of liturgy; and no sacrament is reserved (reservation is totally foreign to the Reformed tradition: the Sacrament is to be eaten, never to be adored outside of the Eucharistic action). However, significantly, the elements are consumed, not simply thrown away. Thus the endurance of the Presence of Christ outside the celebration is, by this action, seen at least as moot.

The Sacraments

The Eucharist is sacrifice because it is the sacramental actualization of Christ's perfect sacrifice. The actions of Christ, which find their summit in the Eucharist, touch the lives of men at all points. These realized actions of Christ in the midst of the Church are the sacraments. Outside of the Eucharist and baptism, there is disagreement among Christian churches concerning any or all other sacramental actions. Therefore, Thurian's ideas concerning sacraments, both in general and in particular, must be investigated. They depend upon his theology of the Church, and his ecclesiology would not be complete without these ideas.

Thurian defines a sacrament as a concrete or material sign, instituted by Christ and practiced by the apostles and by the Church after them. This sign is explained by the Word and accompanied by prayers, in which God himself is committed through his Holy Spirit, for the purpose of applying Christ's redemptive work to the Christian community and to each believer. Above all, a sacrament is a mystery, transcending the faith of the Church.[2] In the sacraments, Christ's own life is communicated to the Church, along with the fullness of the

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[1] Interview with Max Thurian, at Taizé, December 28, 1966.

[2] LTM, p. 79; CON, p. 71.

Holy Spirit.[1]

All Christian worship, in order to be truly Christian worship, should be in its essence sacramental.

> By the Incarnation, Christ has given full dignity to our human nature, our nature as men of flesh and blood, as feeling men. By the institution of the sacraments, never separated from the Word of God which they illumine, Christ has willed that the truth and the life of God overtake us in our corporeal sensibility.[2]

Evidently, the Holy Spirit must give life to the sacraments; they are not the fruit of magical celebration. Therefore, the sacraments may be celebrated only in the Church and by the Church.[3] But the Word must be present in the sacraments too, for in the celebration of the sacraments the Church lives from this Word of God by which she is nourished.[4] Following Calvin, Thurian sees the presence of the Word in the sacraments as essential: "Overlooking the imparting of instruction on the Holy Spirit rendered invalid, for Paul, the professed baptism of John. The sacrament was meaningless unless accompanied by the Word of God clearly understood."[5]

Word, Sign, and the Assembled Community

It would seem, therefore, that unless the Word is preached, there can be no sacrament. The action cannot be pure symbol. The problem is in the meaning of "accompanied by the Word," and this Thurian does not specify. In all churches, of course, a minimum of words accompanies the sacramental rite: the words of Christ's institution or at least a sentence or two conveying the meaning of the symbol or action. Is this sufficient? From Thurian's writings it is impossible to say. But a careful opinion, based on his heritage from Calvin and the Reformers, and on what he implies, would maintain that it is not sufficient, that a sermon, however brief, on the mystery to be accomplished is necessary.[1]

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[1] VUT, p. 75.

[2] Thurian, "Liturgie et actualité," pp. 20-21.

[3] EM, II, 83. [4] LTM, p. 16. [5] CON, p. 24.

Then, too, Thurian assumed the presence of at least a small part of the congregation at the sacramental celebration: the community should (must?) be present.[2]

Here again we have a divergence with Catholic thinking, akin to the problem of Masses celebrated by the ordained minister alone. Again also, although the law and custom may eventually converge, the root theological difference remains. Perhaps the radical basis of both these problems can be pointed out: Thurian's emphasis is on the community. Many times he tells us that the Christian never stands alone, does not pray alone, does not receive grace alone; always the believer is within the Church, the ekklesia, assembly. The sacraments are celebrated by, in, and for the Church. Without the Church, therefore, there can be no sacrament. But this means the whole Body of the Church: the presence of minister alone is not sufficient. And when the Church, represented by the laypeople and the ministers, is assembled, both the Word and sign are essential.

The Catholic would like to agree. The liturgical, theological and biblical renewals, the new sense of community--all have brought to the fore the essential presence and action of the Church. Current practice and theology would hold that the ideas expressed by Thurian are the ideal, indeed should be at least the norm. But in the last analysis, to the Catholic, the Eucharist can be celebrated really and validly by an ordained minister alone, and the other sacraments by minister and recipient alone; and a sermon--to assume Thurian's maximum requirement--is not necessary.

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[1] See below, p. 307.

[2] Cf. LTM, p. 82.

Ex Opere Operato

A Catholic doctrine which Thurian calls into question is that of ex opere operato efficacy of the sacraments. The Catholic exaggeration of this theory he labels monophysite.[1] Yet he can say that "baptism is de facto efficacious, whether conferred with complete perfection of its symbolism or not. . . ."[2] Therefore there is no real disagreement here on essentials.

Thus when the sign instituted by Christ is performed within the Church, and therefore with the Holy Spirit, and is accompanied by the Word, Christ acts and the Redemption is made present to us in mystery.

It remains to be seen which rites (in addition to the Eucharist and baptism) Thurian holds to be sacraments, how they fit into his definitions, and what this holds for the

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[1] Thurian, "Les conséquences du dogme," pp. 113-15.

[2] CON, p. 73.

Catholic theologian and believer.

The Laying-on of Hands

In agreement with the Catholic and Orthodox churches and with much of the Protestant tradition (notably the Anglican and Lutheran traditions), Thurian sees that the laying-on of hands is a sacramental power. It is a rite intimately connected to vocation; thus the Church employs the laying-on of hands in baptizing, in ordaining and in confirming. It also accompanies the ministry of healing. The laying-on of hands can set the seal of God on the choice of man; it confers the power of the Holy Spirit which enables the man to remain faithful.[1] At ordination, this rite "confers an indelible character and imparts a gift of the Holy Spirit which the Lord, in his faithfulness, will not revoke."[2] Thus the laying-on of hands is in itself an unspecified sacramental action, practiced by the apostles and by the Church through the ages, and conferring the gifts of God. The Word specifies which sacrament it is at any time.

The Sacrament of Healing

The laying-on of hands does not always signify a vocation directly, but it does always signify strength. Primarily in this latter symbolism, it is used in the ministry of healing.

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[1] MrCl, p. 88.

[2] Ibid., p. 101. The laying-on of hands can be repeated, however, when one's service or ministry becomes more specific, or is modified, e.g., from diaconate to presbyteriate (Ibid., p. 84).

God is faithful; he heals, pardons, and answers our prayers far beyond what we ask or conceive. This gift of healing was confided by Jesus Christ to the apostles, as is clear from the New Testament. The Church, which has inherited the gifts and ministries confided to the apostles, has therefore also inherited the gift and ministry of healing.[1]

Healing is a true sacrament. The laying-on of hands, itself a sacramental rite, becomes in this ministry a sign of the glorious manifestation of the Kingdom; healing is an eschatological sign. For the whole of fallen creation has been caught up in the restoration of all things in Christ. The miracle of healing, like all miracles, is a sign of this reality, is a sign that the Church is really of the Last Times. And by a ministry of healing, the Church signifies her expectation of the miracle always possible. She lays hands on or practices anointing on the sick in the obedient expectation of the will of God.[2]

> The imposition of hands on the sick is the sign by which the church opposes the power of evil. Anointing with oil is the sign whereby the church bestows the power of the Holy Spirit for the consecration of the sick person to a special service of intercession in his sickness and with a view to the healing of his whole being.[3]

The idea of vocation is here integrated with healing, reinforcing the two-fold symbolism of the laying-on of hands: a seal on vocation and the strength of God.

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[1] LTM, p. 83; Thurian, "Le ministère de la guérison," VC, XII (1958), p. 83.

[2] LTM, p. 83.

[3] Ibid., p. 101.

Absolution: The Forgiveness of Sins

In his earliest writing, Thurian denies that absolution (penance) is a sacrament; he sees no "matter," necessary for the sign.[1] In this view, he was an heir of Calvin, who also rejected penance as a true sacrament (although he kept private, non-obligatory confession of sins).[2] However, as early as his book on confession (1953), Thurian had changed his mind.

The reason for the change can be found in the difference of approach. At first, he sets forth a definition of sacrament, rather classical in its form. Penance, because of "lack of matter," does not seem to fit this definition. Later, he has begun to work out his sacramental theology within the framework of his theology of the Church. Further, he is not afraid to disagree with Calvin, as he does concerning absolution and also concerning confirmation. Thurian's theology of the sacrament of absolution must then be seen as it develops from his ecclesiology.

The Church is a community, and all things are held in common by the baptized: not only faith and spiritual life, but also pain and sin. "The impurity of one member contaminates the whole body."[3]

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[1] JCT, pp. 139-40.

[2] Thurian, "Confession in the Evangelical Churches," in _The Sacraments_: _An Ecumenical Dilemma_, Concilium: Theology in an Age of Renewal, Vol. XXIV (New York: Paulist Press, 1967), p. 26. Luther, however, accepted the sacrament of absolution (_Ibid_., pp. 24-25).

[3] CFS, p. 40.

But the Church can pass judgment on sin and also forgive sin. The Church alone has the power to exclude a sinner from the community and to receive him back afterwards.[1] And, "the Church, the Body of Christ, which means today the humanity of Jesus at work in this world, retains this power of absolution. It is not a question only of preaching forgiveness, but of actually granting it."[2] The power rests in the fact of the Incarnation. To deny the Church this power because of the absolute transcendence of God is a Judaizing notion.[3]

The Church ordinarily forgives sin, appropriately, within the Eucharistic liturgy. Confession is made at the door of the Church upon entering in (in the liturgy of Taizé among others), since the church building is a symbol of the Kingdom, into which only those who have clean hands and pure hearts may enter.[4] Thurian also recommends private confession to an ordained minister, who forgives in the name of the Church.

Calvin had attributed the power of absolution not to the Church or her ministry as such, but only insofar as they announce the Gospel of forgiveness. But who, says Thurian, has ever thought otherwise?[1] Thus he is able to find a harmonious agreement with the thought of the Reformer. Absolution is, of course, the announcement of the Gospel: the loving forgiveness of God. Indeed, all ministry can be recapitulated in the forgiveness of sins.

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[1] Ibid., p. 42.

[2] Ibid., p. 50; Thurian, "Confession in Evangelical Churches," p. 28.

[3] Thurian, "Confession in Evangelical Churches," p. 27.

[4] InET, p. 7.

> Since it is sin that provides the obstacle to our communion with God, it is by its remission through God's mercy that that communion is restored. By the remission of sins God looks upon us as saints, as sinners completely pardoned, and gives us a share in the blessedness of the communion of saints.[2]

It must be mentioned also, in conclusion, that each sacramental action of the Church only renovates and deepens the fullness accorded to the Christian in baptism.[3]

Summary

All truly Christian prayer is within the community: the Church. The prayer of the Church is the liturgy: an action of Jesus Christ in and by his Church, which is his Body on earth. The whole Body of Christ offers the liturgy, both ordained ministers and laypeople. The liturgy is the life of the Church; it truly makes the Church a living Body, the Body from which the liturgy itself arises and has always arisen. Even the theology of the Church is primarily doxological: in adoring her Lord, the Church presents her faith and her truth.

And the liturgical action par excellence is the Eucharist. The Eucharist is banquet, memorial, sacrifice, thanksgiving and intercession, and a sign of the Kingdom of God. If the Church makes the Eucharist, the Eucharist makes the Church; it builds up the Body of Christ, nourishes it and strengthens it. It is a sacrament of unity and love. The Eucharist, which presents us here and now with the Real Presence of Christ, must be offered by the whole Church, must contain both Word and sacrament.

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[1] Thurian, "Confession in Evangelical Churches," p. 27.

[2] LTM, p. 69.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 101.

The other sacraments, too, contain Word and symbol. In celebrating these rites, the Church uses the gifts and ministries inherited from the apostles, who received them from their Lord. All Christian worship should be sacramental, for the Incarnation has granted full dignity to the whole created world.

There are really two sacraments of healing and restoration: healing of the sick in body, and absolution of sins. The healing of the sick, like baptism, confirmation, and orders, is effected by the laying-on of hands, which gives strength and sets God's seal on man's chosen vocation. And in the sacrament of absolution, wherein the Church really forgives sins, is recapitulated the whole of the ministry of the Church.

Prayer, liturgy, the Eucharist, the sacraments of healing: all have their life in the ministry and mission of the Church, and all create and shape and nourish this life until the coming of the final victory, the Kingdom of God.

CHAPTER VI

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THE MINISTRY OF THE CHURCH TO THE WORLD

The Ministry of the Church: Sign of the Ministry of Christ

Christ the Messiah, King and Priest, established in his death and in the Holy Spirit the Church, a new creation. Max Thurian sees the whole crucifixion event as filled with ecclesial symbolism.[1] Christ and the Church are closely bound together in this event. Indeed, Christ is neither distinct nor separated from the Church. On the other hand, the Church is not to be confounded with Christ; it is not the Kingdom of God.[2] Rather, the Church speaks and works, prays and celebrates in the name of the Lord Jesus; that is, the Church is the ambassador of Christ.[3] Christ speaks and acts today through the Church. To receive and to listen to the Church is to receive and to listen to Christ; to reject the Church is to reject Jesus Christ and the Father who sent him.[4]

The Church is the sign of the presence of Christ, ever living, present and active in the world, for the proclamation of the Gospel, to offer spiritual sacrifices to the Father, and to win the world by the life that it leads so that God may be glorified.[1]

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[1] MMC, chapter 9, passim.

[2] Thurian, "Les conséquences du dogme," p. 111.

[3] EM, I, 112.

[4] Thurian, "Les conséquences du dogme," pp. 110-11; OB, p. 69.

> The Son of God has willed, in his Incarnation, to be present to men through the mediation of his humanity. Resurrected, he has willed to leave signs which recall and actualize this mediation: the totality of these signs is the Church, the Body of Christ. The major signs are the Scripture and the sacraments, the bearers of Christ. . . . Each member of the Body of Christ is also a sign of the presence of the Lord.[2]

Each Christian is more than just a sign of Christ; he _is_ _a_ Christ; baptized in water and in the Spirit, he is anointed. Thus he shares, by his baptism, in the prophetic, priestly and kingly ministry of _the_ Christ.[3] Worship, as we have seen, is the action of all the people of God; the whole Body of Christ joins in his adoration and intercession.[4] But the ministry of Christ is not only in prayer and in the adoration of the Father. More importantly, it is a ministry in the world and to the world. And this ministry, too, is an action of all the people of God.

The Universal Priesthood of the Faithful

The whole Church and each individual Christian, therefore, are signs and instruments of Christ's ministry in the world.[1] All Christians constitute one royal and prophetic priesthood. This royal priesthood is not a ministry in the Church, for the edification of the Church, but a priesthood of the Church for the salvation of all men.[2]

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[1] Thurian, "Les conséquences du dogme," p. 111; VUT, pp. 58-59; OB, p. 64.

[2] Thurian, "Le mémorial des saints: Essai de compréhension évangélique d'un aspect de la pieté catholique," VC, XIII (1959), p. 28.

[3] CON, pp. 86-87.

[4] Thurian, "Liturgie et actualité," p. 21. See above, Chapter V, _passim_.

It is easy to fall into confusion on this universal priesthood. Ministers and laymen together constitute this priesthood. But their unity cannot be preserved by confusing their vocations, their own particular contributions.[3]

> This kingly priesthood of the baptized lay people is not, then, a power given anybody and everybody to assume an office in the Church. It is too often in this way that the idea of the universal priesthood is interpreted. The kingly priesthood is the priesthood of the whole Church, as universal body of Christ. . . .[4]

On the other hand, the Church may not be divided into two castes. Rather, pastors, in that which pertains to their ministry, and laymen, in that which pertains to theirs, represent equally the whole Church. The Church "is neither clerical nor lay, but the Body of Christ wherein the members, in unity, are diversified in it by multiple functions."[5]

The priesthood of all and the ministry of the ordained have one common end: the praise and glory of God. They find their unity in the Eucharist, which makes possible, ultimately, the communion of the priesthood and ministry of the Church with the priesthood and ministry of Christ.[1]

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[1] OB, p. 69.

[2] CON, p. 88. Cf. Thurian, "L'ordination des pasteurs," p. 203; OB, p. 79.

[3] OB, p. 79.

[4] CON, pp. 87-88.

[5] Thurian, "L'ordination des pasteurs," p. 207.

The Church: Prophet, Priest, and King

All ministry is based on the ministry of Christ as prophet, priest, and king.[2] Christ, the Good Shepherd, is, as his title indicates, the one who has been perfectly anointed by the Father. He has received prophetic, priestly and royal anointing; he possesses the fullness of the power of God and is the perfect successor of Moses, Aaron and David.

Prophetic Ministry

Christ is prophet because he has given to us the Word of God in the Gospel; he leads us in all truth.[3] He is in fact the Word and the Truth.

The Church, sign, instrument, and ambassador of Christ, is a prophetic community, called to praise the Father, to minister to the world in preaching, instruction, catechism, and theology.[4]

> The prophetic ministry in the church, the sign and instrument of Christ the prophet, is the ministry of the word proclaimed with the power of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit resurrects, vivifies, interiorizes and orients the ecclesial and liturgical institution toward eschatological fulfillment.[5]

The prophetic ministry of the Church is a ministry of witness. The Christian shares in this ministry by oral testimony, by the witness of his word. He brings back to his neighbor the truth of Christ, and he makes known to him the consequences of this truth in his life.[1] Through the teaching of the Church, the baptized Christian learns of the service to which he ~~is~~ called, and in the Lord's Supper, he relives the mystery of his consecration to the royal and prophetic priesthood of the Body of Christ. Confirmed, he is available and consecrated for a catechetical function in the Church.[2]

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[1] OB, p. 62.

[2] Ibid., pp. 55ff.

[3] Thurian, "Situation du sacerdoce," p. 262.

[4] LTM, p. 111. See also CON, pp. 81-82.

[5] OB, p. 56.

The ordained ministers in the Church share also in the universal prophetic task of the Church, for they are engaged primarily in a ministry of the Word.[3] They are consecrated to preach and teach the Word of God, to catechize and to bear witness to the truth.[4]

Priesthood

On the cross, Jesus the true high priest died for all men, offering to the Father a perfect sacrifice and efficacious intercession, which became for us salvation.[5] Thus Jesus is priest not only on Calvary, but in his perfect intercession now in heaven, the perpetual memorial of his sacrifice.[6] The whole Church, in communion with Christ, is a royal priesthood.

Christ's priesthood and the royal and prophetic priest-

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[1] Thurian, "Situation du sacerdoce," p. 264. See also CON, pp. 81-82.

[2] Thurian, "Situation du sacerdoce," p. 264.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 267.

[4] LTM, p. 112.

[5] Thurian, "Situation du sacerdoce," p. 262.

[6] OB, p. 58.

> hood of the entire People of God therefore has as its essential function the consecration of the world to God in sacrifice and intercession. This priesthood exists for the world and for all men; it is a priesthood constituting the mission of Christ and the church in the world.[1]

All Christians are priests, then, not for the Church, but for the world and in the world.[2] The royal priesthood of all is made possible only through communion, in the Holy Spirit, with the unique and perfect sacrifice and intercession of Jesus Christ; it is possible only as sign and instrument of this sacrifice. This priesthood exists to serve, represent and realize the perfect priesthood of Christ.[3]

The priesthood of all the faithful is therefore, like that of Christ, a sacrifice--the spiritual sacrifice of the whole of life, and an intercession for all mankind.[4] The layman is anointed and ordained for this royal priesthood by his baptism, through and by which he is consecrated and commissioned to serve the world.[5]

Liturgical worship is the action of all the people of God. In worship, the faithful manifest and practice their royal priesthood, by responses, hymns and movements, by praise and prayer. Thus all Christians have free access to the throne of grace. Worship therefore can be and should be ecumenical primarily because it is deeply communal, an act of all the royal priesthood led by their ministers.[1] In this liturgical prayer and praise of the Church there is no intermediary. The celebrant (minister) expresses the thanksgiving and offering of all in the great Eucharistic prayer.[2]

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[1] Ibid., p. 62.

[2] Ibid. See also CON, p. 88. The visible unity of the Church implies the recognition of a common ministry of all the churches, a common royal priesthood (Thurian, "L'unité visible," VC, XVI (1962), p. 154).

[3] OB, pp. 51-52. Thurian comments approvingly on the second chapter of Lumen Gentium (Vatican II), where the priesthood is situated among and within the people of God (Interview with Max Thurian, at Taizé, December 27, 1966).

[4] OB, p. 58; LTM, p. 111.

[5] CON, p. 90.

The diverse ministries within the Church are at the service of the unique priesthood of Jesus Christ and of all the Church. "They are the ministers or servants of the royal and prophetic priesthood of the People of God."[3] The pastor shares in Christ's priestly action of sacrifice and intercession. "He celebrates the Eucharist in remembering before the Father the one perfect sacrifice of Christ. He intercedes for the sanctification of the whole Church and of each of the faithful."[4] Again, both the distinction and the unity between the universal priesthood of the faithful and the ministry of particular service of this priesthood, exercised by ordained ministers, must be maintained.[5]

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[1] Thurian, "Present Aims," p. 112. See also Thurian, "Liturgie et actualité," pp. 21-22; InET, p. 2; CON, pp. 87, 92ff.

[2] Thurian, "Joie au ciel, exulte la terre," p. 10. For a full discussion of the problem of mediation, see above, pp. 143-44. Thurian, however, distinguishes the functions of the baptized vs. the confirmed layman; the former is consecrated for service to the world, the latter for service to the Church, in the Church: see below, pp. 175-79.

[3] OB, p. 49.

[4] LTM, p. 112. See also Thurian, "Situation du sacerdoce," p. 265.

[5] OB, p. 49.

Royal Ministry

Christ is king. His office, by power of his resurrection and ascension, is Lord of the Church and of the world. By his power he directs all things, in unity with the Father and the Holy Spirit.[1] His power is pastoral and episcopal, and wholly founded on his unique sacrifice and his watchful love.[2] Thus, the kingly ministry of Christ is not triumphalism, but royal acceptance of servanthood.

The Church, in union with her Master, is a royal people. She exercises an authoritative ministry in the service of unity and love among mankind, and this ministry too is based on generous sacrifice and watchful love.[3] The Church leads, in the midst of the nations, a way of life that radiates Christ. "She does not teach a moral lesson to the world; rather, she demonstrates by her existence the power of the Resurrection which alone gives peace."[4] The Christian shares in this ministry by the brotherly love which he bears toward all men; he is a sign of the victory of the Risen One over the powers of evil.[5]

The layman serves the world not only by the influence of his Christian life, but by fraternal assistance. He is called upon, and available, to look after the faithful in their need, to visit the sick, to practice even the cure of souls, under the direction of his pastor.[1]

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[1] Thurian, "Situation du sacerdoce," p. 263.

[2] OB, p. 59.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Thurian, "Situation du sacerdoce," p. 263.

[5] Ibid., p. 264; CON, p. 87.

The pastors within this royal people, the Church, are ministers of Christ the King. By administering the sacraments, the pastor incorporates new Christians into the Body of Christ, consecrates them, blesses them and shares the gifts of the Spirit. "As minister of Christ the king, the pastor exercises in addition the authority of the shepherd who leads his flock with love and discipline."[2]

The Church, then, in her ministry to the world, is a royal priesthood which proclaims, as prophetic community, the praises of God.[3]

The Sacraments of the Consecration of the Layman

Baptism

Christian baptism is redemptive and purifying immersion in the death and resurrection of Christ, rendered present to the believer. The baptized is by this immersion incorporated into the Body of Christ, which is the Church. Baptism is only the first step in our sharing in the life of the Body of Christ; ever anew each day we must plunge ourselves by faith into this life, this death, this resurrection of

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[1] Thurian, "Situation du sacerdoce," pp. 264-65; CON, p. 94.

[2] LTM, p. 112; CON, p. 94; Thurian, "Situation du sacerdoce," pp. 265-66.

[3] Thurian, "Situation du sacerdoce," p. 263. There is not a necessary order or a hierarchy among the three functions of prophet, priest, and king. This latter order is historical in the life of Christ, but the Church is simultaneously and equally prophet, priest, and king. See above, pp. 83-84.

Christ.[1]

This new birth makes us all brothers in one and the same family of God:

> We all believe the essential truths of the evangelical faith. Supernatural charity binds us indissolubly to each other, and as Paul says, this charity believes all things; that is to say that we should trust one another fully, not be mutually suspicious, not set ourselves in opposition to one another. Since we have been thus incorporated into one and the same family, in spite of the temporary dissensions in its midst we should do everything today as though this family were in the process of rediscovering its deep and visible unity.[2]

Total Christian baptism implies not only this sharing in the death and resurrection of Christ through the baptism of water, but also includes baptism in the Holy Spirit, conferred by the imposition of hands. This baptism in the Spirit "signifies and renders present the mystery of Pentecost, and it confers upon the believer the gifts of the Holy Spirit necessary for Christian faith and conduct."[3] This imposition of hands impresses upon the Christian a seal, a sign and a testimony. The baptized is also anointed, which illuminates and consecrates him to the royal priesthood of the people of God.[4] Thus baptism of the Spirit is a first "ordination" of laymen to this priesthood of the Church in the world.[5]

The layman becomes prophet, priest, and king; he is a christ, an anointed of the Lord.[1] He belongs to the chosen race, the holy nation, the ransomed people. He participates in the threefold ministry of Christ, as we have seen, by the witness of his word, by personal and community prayer, and by the radiance of his life.[2] So the Church forms the members of the people of God into a missionary community, for a living witness rendered to Christ her Lord.[3]

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[1] CON, pp. 11, 27; LTM, pp. 28, 63, 82; EM, I, 112; Thurian, "La liturgie du baptême," VC, XI (1957), p. 351.

[2] LTM, p. 28.

[3] CON, p. 27. See also ibid., p. 22.

[4] Ibid., pp. 37-38; LTM, pp. 81-84.

[5] CON, p. 90.

Confirmation

Baptism in water and in the Spirit consecrates to a royal and prophetic priesthood of Christ and of the Church _in the world_ and for the salvation of men; confirmation consecrates to service _in the Church_ and for the sanctification of the faithful, the building up of the Body of Christ.[4] Thus, confirmation constitutes a second "ordination" of laymen to service of the Church.[5] Therefore, the baptized and confirmed layman shares fully in ministry: he serves both the world and his own community, the Church.

Confirmation is here conceived, not as a step in Christian initiation, already in fact completed, but rather as a new consecration. Confirmation should no longer be seen as a kind of finishing-up of baptism;

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[1] _Ibid_., pp. 37, 86-87.

[2] Thurian, "Situation du sacerdoce," pp. 263-64; CON, p. 87. Thurian also suggests Christian hospitality as a sharing in Christ's royal ministry (CON, pp. 92ff.).

[3] OB, p. 145. Baptism, as common to virtually all Christians, is a major foundation of unity. No division of Christians on other points can destroy this fundamental visible unity (VUT, p. 8. See below, pp. 240-41.

[4] Thurian, "Situation du sacerdoce," p. 264.

[5] CON, p. 90.

> it is placed outside of Christian initiation (baptism in water and in the Spirit, catechism, and first communion). It will not confirm baptism, in the sense that an alliance is confirmed or renewed. It is a commitment, on the part of the believer, to serve the Church; and, on the part of God and the Church, to strengthen the believer's faith through the Holy Spirit (Lk 22:32; Rom 1:11), to renew in him the gifts of the Spirit through the imposition of hands, and to illuminate and consecrate him for service in the Church.[1]

According to his share in Christ's prophetic ministry within the Church, the confirmed layman is consecrated and available for a catechetical function; he may be called to teach the Bible and catechism to children, to direct study groups, youth movements, etc. His liturgical service is also more specified than that of the baptized layman, more of a service to the faithful in the Church. He may welcome the faithful to the Church, read the Bible to the assembled community, bring forward the gifts to be offered, pronounce the intercessions in the name of all. And in these tasks of worship, he shares in the priesthood of Christ. As minister of the Kingship of Christ, he is consecrated to a service of assistance and visiting, to look after his fellow Christians, to visit the sick, to care for the poor.[2]

> This commitment to service [in confirmation] is one which the Church can ask of the faithful without specifying the precise nature of the service; it is an offering of one's disposability to the will of God for the service

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[1] CON, p. 99. The laying-on of hands can be repeated when one's service or ministry becomes more specific. See also ibid., p. 83.

[2] Thurian, "Situation du sacerdoce," pp. 264-65.

of the Christian community.[1]

Although a sacramental difference will be perceived between Thurian's theology of confirmation and that of Roman Catholics, the concept of consecration, of service to the Church, is the same. But to Thurian, confirmation is truly a sacrament, a visible sign of the action of Christ.[2] Ultimately, however, any sacramental act of the Church can only renew and deepen the fullness of the gift granted in baptism.[3]

The Church in the Modern World

The Church of Christ, consecrated to a ministry of service to the world, is essentially, of its very nature, missionary.[4] No longer may we hold that the Church stands aloof and pure from an alienated and contaminated world, and that it is her duty to "convert" this world, to change it utterly from its ways, from unholy to holy. Rather, the Church is in the world and totally penetrated by the world;

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[1] CON, p. 85.

[2] For a good exposition of a modern Catholic position, see Karl Rahner, The Church and the Sacraments, Quaestiones Disputatae, No. 9 (New York: Herder and Herder, 1963). Rahner, as opposed to Thurian, seems to make confirmation part of the sacraments of initiation--a delayed, as it were, manifestation of what Thurian calls "baptism in the Spirit." The analysis of their similarities and differences, while fascinating and valuable, is outside the scope of this study. We might note here that Calvin denied that confirmation is a sacrament. Thurian explicitly disagrees with him: "Such a reaction [against the sacrament of confirmation] and consequent position taken by the Reformers show them to have been at once inheritors of the Middle Ages and ignorant of the practice of the early Church (which, indeed, they did not have the instruments to explore)." (CON, p. 2).

[3] LTM, p. 101.

[4] VUT, p. 101.

she is literally a part of the world. The Church is that part of the world, that part of humanity which knows and confesses Jesus Christ as God and Savior.[1]

The function of the Church in the world is to sanctify, to illumine, to discern the values of creation which would be corrupted in this world without the presence of the Church.[2] Simply, she stands as witness and as sign. The totality of life has replaced the word as the primary mark of evangelism and witness today. Instead of pulling non-Christians out of their environment, the Church might better be pushing her own members into a non-Christian environment, "so that they may live in solidarity, love, and esteem--and without prejudice or pretensions--with persons who do not know or comprehend the Gospel."[3]

The Church and the Christian, therefore, should be present everywhere to the world, offering freely the Word of God and the Holy Spirit through the testimony of a full and radiant Christian life. The Church does not have to be numerous to surround and to penetrate all of the city of man. She must be, in the midst of human realities which remain plainly such, the sign of the presence of Christ.[4] The Christian is a sign that the world is on the march toward the accomplishment of the reign of God, a sign that is at once evangelical, baptismal, Eucharistic, and diaconal for his fellow man.[1]

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[1] OB, pp. 122, 145. [2] _Ibid._, p. 120.

[3] Boyd, "The Taizé Community," p. 500. See also Donald G. Bloesch, _Centers of Christian Renewal_ (Philadelphia: United Church Press, 1964), pp. 57-58.

[4] Thurian, "Spiritualité protestante," p. 394; OB, p. 145.

Dialogue with the World

The Church must do more than stand as a sign; she must enter into a vital dialogue with the world. The Church brings the Gospel to the world, but it is the world which shows the Church *how*.[2] In this process of dialogue, of conversation with and in the world, the Church expands to her catholic dimension and reaches a more profound understanding of herself.[3]

> If it is attentive to the history of men, sensitive to the signs of the times and anxious to listen to the entire world in its rich cultural diversity, the church becomes more universal and understands better all of the implications of the gospel which it bears in Christ's name.[4]

Thus the Church must take interest in and learn the values and the vocabulary of the times. She must strive to understand the whole spectrum of modern culture and life: all means of communication, gestures, literature, the novel, films, the theatre. She ought to love the progress in technology, rejoicing in it and not wishing to curb it. Never must she have an attitude of doom, announcing inevitable catastrophe for a world which has lost its innocence, never must the spirit of reaction and the conservation of a utopian ideal dictate to the Church the spirit of her preaching.[5] The

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[1] OB, p. 120.

[2] VUT, p. 101.

[3] *Ibid.*; LTM, pp. 16-17.

[4] OB, p. 121.

[5] *Ibid.*, pp. 107, 112; VUT, p. 104.

Church must look on all the values and progress of the world with hope and gratitude.

Thurian sums up very well these ideas on dialogue with the world:

> The Church as an instrument on earth of the salvation of God does not exist for itself but for the world. It is not a fortress in which one might have to be enclosed for security purposes and for the sake of combating the enemy. The Church is a dedicated people scattered throughout the world, searching for the seed already abundantly sown over the earth by Christ the universal Lord. It helps the growth of the seed by radiating the light of the Holy Spirit and by the warmth of supernatural love. It rejoices at all the signs of Christ's work that it encounters in the world, at all truth, all goodness, and all beauty. It encourages the spread of these human values, fruit of the hidden action of God, in order to bring them to the perfect maturity of the kingdom by the light of the gospel and the consecration supplied by the sacraments. The church offers up all these values to the glory of God in the thanksgiving of the Eucharist.[1]

Compassion, Reflection, and Change

A proud and self-sufficient Church cannot enter into dialogue. Insofar as the Church appears triumphant and therefore a stranger to the lot of men, she causes fear and alienation. But if she knows suffering and agony, while still clinging to the unshakable assurance of faith, then she becomes a friend, compassionate and attractive to men.[2] The poor Church cannot proclaim the good news of salvation without at the same time making the love of God concrete by compassion and a vigorous defense of justice for the poor. For modern man cannot tolerate manifest social inequality despite cries for unity and community of worship.[1]

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[1] LTM, p. 63.

[2] OB, p. 109.

It is necessary, too, that the Church engage in careful reflection on what is absolutely necessary to her existence in order to rid herself of those institutions and accretions of her past life which are not essential and will inevitably be swept away in the future. These accidentals must not constitute a handicap to the Church's witness in the contemporary world.[2] For the Church is the servant of men and not of the self-perpetuation of her own institutional structure. And man, too, changes, as does the world he lives in; the Church must be always with him:

> Indeed, Christ did not die for the salvation of religiosity, but for the salvation of man as man exists at each stage in his development. Although man may no longer be religious tomorrow and may no longer feel the need for a God and for prayer, Christ is there as he always is. . . .[3]

Monastic Communities within the Church

The monk and the religious have their place within the people of God, have their share in the ministry of the Church to the world. The place of the monk is with the layman. Also consecrated to a life of service by baptism and confirmation, the monk must be prophet, priest and king in the midst of the world.[1] Monks must show

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[1] MMC, p. 93; Thurian, "Liturgie et actualité," p. 26. One of the major works of the brothers of Taizé is relief for the poor, particularly those of the southern hemisphere, in Asia, India, and South America. They do this not only by appeals for money, food, and care, but also in sending their brothers out to live among these poor in South America, and to share their economy, their work, and their life. Thus they live their theology: to stand as a sign of Jesus Christ in the midst of the world.

[2] OB, pp. 144-45.

[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 112-13.

> that they are not a potential seed of schism or separation in the body of the Church. Their intention is to be members of the Church, and to fulfill their duties in communion with and harmony with all other members. The same impulse leads them to seek to exercise an authentically Christian presence in the world of men.[2]

Those living in monastic communities, then, are not isolated or in schism; they do not form islands lying on the fringe of the Church; rather they live in its very center. The Church's witness is their witness, her ministry to the world is their ministry. Monastic communities are, in fact, a sign of the Church--a small-scale model of the Church, so to speak.[3] By their life one should recognize the figure and the message of the Church.[4] "May it not be said that the small concrete community of Christians who try to live together their faith in Jesus Christ is like a _sacrament_ of the great universal community--we may say _ecumenical_ community, which represents the totality of Christians?"[5]

Monks are the very presence of the community as sign of the Kingdom which is to come, where everything will be possessed in common, where there will be no marrying nor giving in marriage, and where all will submit in obedience to the one Shepherd.[1] The monk is a sign of the waiting for God. By his life he manifests that after the Incarnation the laws of the world are no more an obligation for all people, but because the Kingdom is here, men and women can be fully consecrated to the Kingdom. "This seems to me a principal function of monastic life: to give this sign of the Kingdom, which is the plenitude of joy and of life with Christ, Christ's election of man. . . ."[2]

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[1] In an interview with this writer (at Taizé, December 27, 1966), Thurian stated that he regrets the special chapter of _Lumen Gentium_ only for monks and religious: "We had fought for the unity between monks and laypeople. . . . I think the place of the monk is within the people of God. . . ."

[2] Biot, _Protestant Monasticism_, p. 117.

[3] _Ibid_., p. 127.

[4] Heijke, _Ecumenical Light_, p. 95.

[5] Biot, "La renaissance de communautés," p. 302. Italics his.

Like the Church within which it lives, the monastic community realizes itself first and foremost by the bond of prayer, and most perfectly in the celebration of the Eucharist.[3] And within the Church, the monk and his community must be in constant dialogue with the world, always called upon and answering, always called in question and asking questions.[4]

And so there are Christian men and women who give up marriage, with the example given by Jesus himself, to obey a call of God and to benefit by God's promise. And they commit themselves to this celibacy not so much until death as until the return of Jesus Christ, not in order to choose a morally better way, but ultimately because God places in His Church the signs of the Kingdom of heaven, of which celibacy is one.[1]

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[1] Ibid., p. 288; Biot, Protestant Monasticism, pp. 117, 125; VUT, p. 72.

[2] Interview with Max Thurian, at Taizé, December 27, 1966.

[3] Heijke, Ecumenical Light, p. 168.

[4] MrCl, p. 121.

Marriage and Celibacy

> The Church, which is a parable of the Kingdom of God, must have a dialectic character. A sort of dialogue is set up between the elements which comprise it. . . . If only one of these elements of the parable exists in the Church, if there is only a monologue instead of the dialectic tension of the Word, the Church's message becomes impoverished and one-sided and loses its prophetic character.[2]

According to Thurian, Christian marriage and Christian celibacy are among the essential and complementary elements of this parable of the Kingdom.[3] Voluntary celibacy for the Kingdom of heaven's sake is the sign of a new order where marriage is no longer a necessity for ensuring a holy posterity to Abraham; in the Church, sonship of God is henceforth of a spiritual kind.[4] Thus celibacy is a sign of the world to come, of the resurrection, a sign of the proximity of the Kingdom of God in which the law of marriage will have no more sway.[5]

The virginity of Mary was in reality a triple sign: of consecration to the exclusive service of God, of poverty in the sense of one who is called to accept only God's fullness, and of the novelty of the Kingdom. The monk, like Mary, testifies by his celibacy to all of these things.[6]

In addition, "celibacy is one of the signs that remind us of the absolute demands of Christ, of his liberating return. . ., and of the need to be watchful, to renounce the world, the flesh and covetous desires, and to welcome joyfully in our hearts the sacrifice of our passions in pure love for Jesus."[1]

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[1] _Ibid._, pp. 52, 103. [2] _Ibid._, p. 23. [3] _Ibid._, p. 22.

[4] _Ibid._, p. 112. [5] MMC, pp. 34-35. [6] _Ibid._, p. 35.

If there is a vocation to celibacy, clearly there is a vocation to Christian marriage also.[2] In his early writing career, Thurian denied that marriage is a sacrament.[3] His reasoning is that it belongs "totally to the order of creation." After a thorough explanation, his position is at least understandable. Many times he repeats that celibacy is a sign of the ultimate overturning of the natural order of creation, of which marriage and fleshly generation are a necessary part; in the kingdom to come there will be no marrying or giving in marriage. Thus marriage, in this context, is not to be in the eschatological Kingdom. It is therefore totally of the order of creation. This kind of reasoning is applied to marriage because it is, like celibacy, a vocation, a life. The other sacraments are judged against quite a different standard: as signs accompanied by a word which commit God to apply Christ's redemption to man. Baptism, confirmation, and holy order, as acts of consecration; the Eucharist, absolution and the laying-on of hands as realizations in sign of the actual redemptive death of Christ, may be judged this way. Marriage may not. Even if one considers marriage as a sign, it is not a sign of the Kingdom to come.

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[1] MrCl, p. 50.

[2] William LeSaint, Review of Marriage and Celibacy, by Max Thurian, Theological Studies, XX (December, 1959), p. 662.

[3] JCT, pp. 139-40; Thurian, "Spiritualité protestante," p. 384.

It is singular that Thurian could ignore Paul's profound symbolism of the union of Christ and his Church (a union that certainly is not wholly of the order of creation) and, moreover, the Apostle's use of the Greek μυστήριον to refer to marriage (Eph 5:21-23). Although the Catholic cannot agree with Thurian's conclusion, his reasoning, given the context of marriage and celibacy, is clear. Nothing in his subsequent writings has changed this viewpoint; indeed, he very rarely even mentions marriage.

Monks, Celibacy, and the Reformed Tradition

Calvin, and the Protestant tradition generally, reject monasticism in the Church. The chief objections seem to be that the communities are a leaven of separation, and that they pretend to be an elite group.[1]

The Protestant theologian Leenhardt is particularly opposed to the justification of celibacy offered by Thurian. He says that the celibate Christian is an isolated man; the condition of the celibate is hardly to be conceived except as outside of the Christian community. This singularly lessens the virtues attributed to the celibate Christian in the perspective of the Kingdom of God. Celibacy sets up two churches: that of married people and that of those vowed to celibacy (and even within the latter, two classes: men and women).[1]

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[1] See ICR, IV.xiii.10 and 14. For Luther's viewpoint, the reader may wish to refer to H. Bluhm, "Martin Luther and the Idea of Monasticism," _Concordia Theological Monthly_, XXXIV (1963), pp. 583-93; and R. H. Esnault, _Luther et le monachisme aujourd'hui_ (Geneva: Editions Labor et Fides, 1964). Modern literature examining the views of the Reformers on this important topic is unfortunately sparse.

Thurian is most strong in his condemnation of religious separateness, and equally so in his closely reasoned justification for these communities as far from separate. They are and must be within the very heart of the Church, for they express and signify the Church; they are an essential and constitutive element of the parable of the Church: a sign of the Kingdom both to come and already here.

As an elite caste, according to Calvin, the monks imagined that there was a way of life more perfect than that which Jesus Christ gives without distinction to his whole Church.[2] But Thurian answers, as we have seen, that as the monk lives, so ought the whole Church. True, not every Christian should live in celibacy and poverty, but every Christian must live a life of consecrated availability and eschatological newness.

On the place and value of monastic life, as with the sacrament of confirmation, Thurian does not reject Calvin. His attitude is rather that Calvin was a man and a theologian of his times; had he lived today, and with the benefit of our modern knowledge (particularly in Scripture studies and patristic history and theology), he would undoubtedly have held a different opinion. It might be said that Thurian is the development and maturation of Calvin's doctrine, in the sense of the development of dogma. All this, of course, is Thurian's opinion, but there would seem to be, in the over-all attitude, a great deal of validity of approach.

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[1] H. Leenhardt, "Evangile, vie conjugale et célibat," Etudes théologiques et religieuses, XXXII, No. 1 (1957), pp. 58-59.

[2] See Biot, Protestant Monasticism, p. 34.

A more serious (and in many ways more interesting) Protestant objection to Thurian's doctrine of monasticism comes from Leenhardt:

> . . . without doubt, also, such communities cannot be ecclesial communities, because the pure reason for community is not, as in the Church, the confession and the preaching of Jesus Christ. . . . It is first of all a community of celibates, and it is that which defines it. It is only secondarily a Christian community, but this is not its defining character.[1]

The point here is what precisely defines monastic communities as such, without which they would not be so. After a careful study of Thurian, one might take issue here with Leenhardt. In a hierarchy of values, Thurian would probably choose the concept of consecrated celibacy plus poverty as constitutive of the community. Now it is clear that these are but concrete ways of living a much deeper reality: absolute availability to God and eschatological newness. But to do this, the whole Church is bound. The monk chooses one way of living this; the layman who is not a monk, another. Christianity, or Christian life would then be seen as essentially constitutive of monastic community, whereas personal vocation would determine an individual man's identification with this community. This does not completely solve the problem; monks, after all, are celibate by profession: this is a fact. The objection remains a good one, but the argument, if seen as having only two clear sides, is presented too simplistically.

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[1] Leenhardt, "Evangile et célibat," p. 59.

These voices from within the Protestant communion opposed to monastic life point out the radical nature of the experiment of Taizé. Monastic communities are far from representative of the totality of actual Protestantism, even of orthodox Protestantism. It might be considered rather a question posed to the Protestant conscience than a reality definitively admitted. It must be recognized that for the average Protestant, if he is aware of the movement at all, it represents something abnormal, and on the whole, suspect.[1]

Some Problems for a Catholic

One would not expect to hear a Catholic voice raised against monasticism and celibacy. Indeed, the renaissance of monastic life in the Reformed Church has caused much joy among Roman Catholics and has been a powerful moving force toward unity. Nevertheless, in these times of profound and often wrenching renewal in the theological approaches to religious life, there are some ideas of Thurian that seem to this writer to be unsatisfactory, and even dangerously misleading.

In Marriage and Celibacy, Thurian lists the advantages of celibacy.[2] The practical advantages are obvious, but these can hardly be said to be reason either for the existence of Christian celibacy or for personal vocation to that life. To imply that practical advantages are Christian reasons is misleading. Much more seriously misleading are the interior reasons. Here, Thurian states that marriage is, in effect, an indirect consecration to God, while celibacy is direct. No modern theologian would tell the married that they go to God indirectly by their own choice, but that the monk has chosen to go directly. This teaching, unintentionally, surely, degrades marriage to second-class Christianity, since it is freely chosen in opposition to direct consecration to God.

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[1] Biot, "La renaissance de communautés," pp. 303-04.

[2] MrCl, pp. 104ff.

Another interior reason for celibacy is to have more time for liturgy and personal prayer. Either this is again really a "practical" reason, or else it too is a hazardous path. For are not all Christians bound to pray, and that without ceasing? The problem lies in the definition of personal prayer, which certainly can describe the daily work of the laborer or the teacher, the love actions of a man for his wife, the witness of the suffering and dying.

Of course, Thurian is a celibate. He speaks from this viewpoint and from his own obvious personal fulfillment. Then, too, he must press his case very vigorously from within the Reformed Church, much more so than the Catholic. Nor may we imply that he consciously and really considers marriage in any way inferior to celibacy. And finally, the theological precision of the place of marriage vis-à-vis celibacy and the absolute values of each is by no means certain, clear, or without enormous difficulty. Thus we do not criticize him directly, but rather suggest that a total re-thinking of these ideas, a total departure from the "accepted" ideas of the earlier book (1955), would now be in order.[1]

Summary

The Church is ambassador and sign of the presence of Christ, living and active in the world. The ministry of Christ is in the world and to the world, and each Christian is a christ, an anointed, who shares in this royal and prophetic priesthood. This universal priesthood is not a power or an office in the Church, but a priesthood of the Church as a whole, *ad extra*, as it were, for the salvation of all men. As prophet, the Church ministers to the world in preaching, catechism, and theology. As priest, the Church shares in the priesthood of Christ, offering a spiritual sacrifice of the whole of its life and an intercession for all mankind. As king, the Church exercises an authoritative ministry of unity and of love; she lives the spendor of a Christian life in the world.

The layman is consecrated and ordained to this royal and prophetic priesthood by the sacraments of baptism and confirmation. By baptism, he is incorporated into the Body of Christ and immersed into the death and resurrection of the Lord; by baptism in the Spirit, he receives the gifts of the Holy Spirit necessary for Christian faith and conduct. The baptized layman shares in the ministry of the Church to the world by his word, his prayer, and his life. By his confirmation, the layman is ordained also to service in the Church, for the sanctification of the faithful by instruction, by assistance and visiting, and in his faithful participation in the liturgy. Thus confirmation, to Thurian, is by no means a "completion" of baptism, nor even part of the sacraments of initiation; it is a totally fresh consecration of the layman, giving him a ministry to the Church, a ministry which is a deepening and extension of his share in the royal and prophetic priesthood of Christ.

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[1] Although Thurian has not as yet produced any further work on this topic, another brother of Taizé, who is also a psychiatrist, has written a most interesting book on the subject. This shows, at the least, that the Community of Taizé is continually re-examining its own nature. See: Yann Fentener van Vlissingen, *Approches psychologiques du célibat* (Taizé: Les Presses de Taizé, 1969).

The Church is that part of the world of man which knows and confesses Jesus Christ as God and Savior. She is part of the world, and must enter into dialogue with the world, ever sensitive to the signs of the times, ever valuing the vocabulary and the progress of men. The Church must suffer with man and know his agony; she must seek and strive for justice and equality.

Within the Church, monastic communities, consecrated by celibacy to absolute availability, live as signs of the Kingdom to come. For celibacy is an essential and complementary element, along with Christian marriage, of the parable of the Kingdom which the Church is in this world. Although there are many difficulties in Thurian's ideas of monastic life and celibacy, his vision, basically, is clear and evangelical: the Church--in all of its members--lives in this world the royal and prophetic priesthood of Christ, a ministry of service and a sign of the Kingdom of God which is to come.

CHAPTER VII

MINISTRY IN THE CHURCH, FOR THE CHURCH

Ministry to the Church

In the heart of the royal and prophetic priesthood of the Church there is a ministry. This ministry exists for the Church and for all Christians; it is a ministry ad intra, ordained for the building up of the Body of Christ, the Church, by its Head, Jesus Christ.[1]

The ordained minister in the Church is the member of the people of God chosen by vocation to exercise the charge and the service of the Word, the sacraments, and authority. "The Church invokes the Holy Spirit on all its ministers, that they may minister the sacraments in accordance with Christ's institution, and that they may lead God's people as true shepherds of the flock entrusted to them."[2]

The task of preserving doctrine falls to the minister. Ministry is, too, at the service of unity in truth and charity.[3]

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[1] OB, p. 63; Thurian, "L'unité visible," VC, XVI (1962), p. 154.

[2] LTM, p. 61. See also: LTM, p. 108; OB, p. 148; Thurian, "Situation du sacerdoce," p. 265; Thurian, "L'ordination des pasteurs," p. 213. The ministry of the Church is essentially a ministry of the Word, and the ordained minister, therefore, is primarily a servant of the Word (OB, p. 74; Thurian, "Les conséquences du dogme," p. 111).

[3] LTM, pp. 10, 64; Thurian, "L'ordination des pasteurs," p. 211; Thurian, "L'organisation du ministère," p. 36.

The minister has the responsibility to form the faith of Christians by doctrine and the Gospel, to sanctify their life by the celebration of the sacraments, to build up their community in charity and unity and by the Spirit of power and of love and of self-discipline.[1] Thurian gives a fine summary of these ideas:

> The ordained minister in the church is first of all a servant of the word of God. He has the charism and charge to proclaim the good news of salvation, the gospel. He accomplishes this in liturgical preaching, catechetical teaching and theological explanation. Secondly, he is an officiant of the sacraments of Christ. He presides at the celebration of the signs of Christ's presence and action for the sanctification of Christians. Thirdly, he is the representative of the Holy Spirit's authority. In his responsibility for a community, in his work as spiritual director and in his care for certain of his brother Christians, he manifests by his function the Spirit's authority over men in order to encourage their growth in charity and to maintain unity among them.[2]

By their sharing in a communion with Christ the pastor, ministers in the Church are signs and instruments of the ministry of the Lord Jesus in the Church. The minister is the visible sign of the love of Christ the Good Shepherd for his flock, the Church: Christ nourishes it by his Word and his body, he leads it to the eternal Kingdom. The minister is also a visible sign of unity.[3] ". . . Christ uses ministers in the church as signs and instruments by which he himself can proclaim his word in the church, celebrate the sacraments of his presence and action, and exercise his authority as Pastor and Episcopos in the power of the Spirit, in order to stimulate charity and fortify unity among the People of God."[1]

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[1] OB, pp. 63, 148.

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 75-76.

[3] Thurian, "Situation du sacerdoce," p. 265; "L'ordination des pasteurs," p. 200; "Unity of the Ministry," p. 294.

The Eucharist makes the Church, but the ministry makes the Church legitimate, for the ecclesial community is not legitimately assembled except in the presence of the episcopos and presbyterium, or in communion with them.[2] Par excellence, this is an assembly around the Eucharist, for in the Eucharist the ministry of the ordained finds its unity with the priesthood of all, in their common end: the praise and glory of God.[3] At the Eucharist,

> the ministry is accomplished in the church by means of the proclamation of the word of God, the celebration of the sacrament of Christ's gift and sacrifice and the uniting of the Christian community into one body under the authority of the Pastor and Episcopos of our lives, symbolized in the presidency of the ministers of the church.[4]

Vocation and the Universal Church

It is the whole Church which, having recognized the gifts of the Lord, ordains and consecrates new ministers.[5] By "the whole Church," Thurian wishes to express two meanings: first, that ministers are recognized and ordained by all the people of God, and second, that they are ordained to serve the one Church universal. Ministers therefore are the servants of all the people of God, but they serve them, ordinarily, as assembled in community in the local church. "Even if, as a result of division, his ministry is not able to be accepted everywhere, the particular Church which consecrates and ordains a pastor does not do it for itself alone, but for the service of the whole Body of Christ."[1]

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[1] OB, p. 65.

[2] Thurian, "L'organisation du ministère," pp. 33-34.

[3] OB, p. 63.

[4] *Ibid*., p. 64.

[5] Thurian, "L'ordination des pasteurs," p. 205.

The gifts of God are irrevocable; God does not repent of the vocation which he addresses to one of the faithful. The fact of being set apart in the Church of God for the ministry remains unchangeable.[2]

Authority as Service

A full understanding of the Gospel is impossible save in the universal communion of the Church, and a ministry of unity and authority is necessary for maintaining truth in the Church.[3] But this authority exercised by the ministry in the Church is primarily a service of the unity of the Church. The authority is there only to help the royal priesthood of the people of God to be exercised in truth and unity: to bring the truth of the Word of God to the people and to keep in unity the members of the Body of Christ.[4]

The ministry in the Church has no worth or substance in itself; it exists only to serve, represent and realize the ministry of Christ. Jesus designates himself the servant of the disciples, and the ministers of the Church, following his example, must wait on their brethren as servants. The greater the authority, the greater must be the humility.[1]

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[1] Ibid., p. 211. See also Thurian, "L'organisation du ministère," p. 37.

[2] MrCl, p. 101. [3] VUT, p. 105.

[3] Interview with Max Thurian, at Taizé, December 27, 1966.

> The Christian who has a ministry of authority in the Church needs to know that those whom he has the duty of leading cannot share the cares of his ministry, cannot accept him wholeheartedly, unless he is their dedicated and willing servant and gives them the signs of that will to serve after the example of the Master. That humble service is a sign of participation in the authority of Christ.[2]

That ministry is service does not remove the necessary obedience owed to authority in the Church, for the Christian conception of ministry requires obedience.[3] In his "self-examination before confession," Thurian proposes the following question:

> Do I truly respect the pastors and Church authorities? Do I obey and submit to those who have the spiritual rule over me, knowing that they watch on behalf of my soul, as they that shall have to give account, so that they may perform their ministry with joy? (Heb. 13:17)[4]

The New Testament Ministry and Diversity of Forms through the Ages

Ministries in the various Christian churches today exist in a great diversity of forms. This can cause many difficulties, especially with regard to unity. Vast social changes today, however, have led the churches to re-think the structure of their ministries, to rid themselves of non-theological factors in order, if possible, to rediscover a common doctrine and practice in their ministries in the light of the Word of God.[1]

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[1] OB, p. 53.

[2] LTM, p. 136. The Catholic theological viewpoint is, of course, the same (although practice in both traditions leaves much to be desired and yet accomplished). Thurian points out that Vatican II insists on the ministry as service: "No one can deny that it [the Church] enjoys this power [of the ministry], but it is to serve the Word of God and the Church, not to dominate them." (RPV, p. 51).

[3] Thurian, "L'organisation du ministère," p. 36.

[4] CFS, p. 132.

There are no ready-made answers to these problems of ministry in the Bible or the writings of the patristic age. According to New Testament evidence, the forms of Christian ministry were first inspired by the organization of the synagogue, though the apostles were careful to safeguard the fundamental originality of the Christian ministry. From the very beginning, the apostles desired to see the continuation of their apostolic ministry; this ministry consisted primarily in founding churches, watching over them and holding them together. In addition, a local ministry in the churches was necessary: to govern, to watch over the deposit of faith and external affairs.[2] Thus, the apostles appointed various kinds of ministers: deacons, presbyters, auxiliary apostles.[3]

The ministry founded by Jesus Christ took first the form of the college of the Twelve, and then of the group of Seventy who received an evangelical mission.

> We observe that in the early church the same division continued and diversified itself. The apostles and their collaborators, on the one hand, founded and governed the churches; the local ministers, on the other hand, constructed and presided over a local church. Among the latter were prophets (preachers), pastors (shepherds), doctors (teachers), presbyters (ancients), episcopoi (overseers), deacons (servants), etc. Thus, the ministry in the primitive church is simultaneously an extension of the

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[1] OB, p. 46. [2] OB, p. 77; VUT, p. 64.

[3] OB, p. 73; VUT, p. 36.

> apostolic ministry of the Twelve, which grew with the number of apostles' collaborators to found and govern the churches, and a distribution of the ministerial charge in the local churches among local ministers who organized and presided over these churches.[1]

The ministry of the church at Jerusalem, for example, seems to have been comprised of a college of elders, presbyteroi, presided over by James. This college was the symbol in the local church of apostolic collegiality. It is possible that the president of the presbyters was not always one man. After the death of the apostles, there was a fairly rapid development of the office of local presbyter-bishop charged with the responsibility of governing the church, but this presbyter-bishop worked in close conjunction with a college of presbyters, and was supported by a developed diaconate.[2]

The evolution and development of ministry can be traced in the early Christian centers. In some cases, St. Paul had appointed ministers grouped in colleges of presbyters without a presiding officer; in other, although this is less certain, he had directed the ministers to assume in turn the role of president of the presbyteral college, or episcopos.[3] In the New Testament, the title of episcopos is equivalent to that of presbyter. At all times, it designates a function, not a state.[1]

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[1] OB, pp. 74-75. Concerning apostolic succession in the New Testament, Thurian says: "We can no longer look upon the apostles as merely the nucleus of the whole church, nor make them merely the first bishops of the church from whom all others descend by personal and automatic succession." (OB, p. 48).

[2] Ibid., p. 79; interview with Max Thurian, at Taizé, December 27, 1966.

[3] VUT, p. 64.

Ephesus was founded by Paul with a collegial ministry of presbyters-episcopoi on the model of the synagogue. Both Paul and, later, Timothy, maintained surveillance of the church. After their death, the college of presbyters presides, while the episcopos represents and personifies the church of Ephesus (Apoc. 2:1).[2]

St. Ignatius speaks of an episcopos in the college of presbyters. But both the bishop and the presbyters are properly speaking ministers of Christ, in the service of the people of God assembled in community in the local church.[3]

Thus, in the New Testament, bishops are clearly not the same as they are today in the Roman Catholic Church, nor can a presbyteral-synodal polity be clearly found.[4]

Although Paul speaks often of apostles, prophets and doctors, the title priest (hiereus) is never accorded to the ministers of the Church in the New Testament.

> Even the Jewish priests converted to the gospel (Acts 6:7) do not seem to have occupied a particularly sacerdotal place in the church. The ministry in the church was exercised by apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, doctors, episcopoi, presbyters, deacons . . . (Eph. 4:11; Tim. and Tit.), but never by priests, "hiereis," by men consecrated to a sacrificial priesthood according to the meaning of the order of Aaron. The ministry in the church is of an entirely new and original nature with respect to

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[1] Thurian, "Situation du sacerdoce," p. 268.

[2] Thurian, "L'organisation du ministère," pp. 29-30.

[3] Ibid., pp. 30, 37; interview with Max Thurian, at Taizé, December 27, 1966.

[4] OB, p. 48.

the sacrificial priesthood of the Old Covenant.[1]

Thus, the pastoral ministry has been diversely organized in the history of the Church, under the leadership of the Holy Spirit and according to the demands of the concrete situation.[2] All forms of Church government must have a form which manifests the fact that it is Christ who is Head of the Church and that it is the Holy Spirit who quickens the structure of the Church and gives the various ministries.

> But there certainly are several ways of manifesting this guidance of Christ and of the Spirit from above. These various ways are conditioned by ages and places, by non-theological factors. The Church must show itself liberal in this sphere, and must allow multiformity.[3]

If one today denudes the ministry of all "isms" (juridicism, materialism, clericalism), one arrives at a deep biblical conception of the ministry.

> The false "juridical power" gives way to gifts and to the assistance of the Holy Spirit; the false "material succession" gives place to insertion into the succession of ministries of the Church, guaranteed by the fidelity of Jesus Christ; the false "clerical character" gives place to a conception of authority of the ministry of which the Lord remains the sole source, which remains a function of all the Church, but which is nevertheless confided in a particular fashion to one of the members of the community.[4]

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[1] Ibid., pp. 61-62. See also Thurian, "L'organisation du ministère," p. 36; Thurian, "La communauté de Cluny," pp. 110-11. For a fuller treatment of the problem of priesthood and mediation in the Church, as understood by the Reformed and Roman Catholic traditions, see above, pp. 143-44.

[2] Thurian, "Situation du sacerdoce," p. 265.

[3] Thurian, "Unity of the Ministry," p. 294.

[4] Thurian, "L'ordination des pasteurs," p. 203. Certain problems brought out in this quotation, concerning apostolic succession and the "character" of ordination, will be treated elsewhere in this chapter.

The Twelve

Prominent as the foundation and life of New Testament ministry are the twelve apostles. The Holy Spirit, person, power, and gift, has invested the Twelve with his power in carrying out their ministry and their mission, and it is this same Spirit that they impart to men in the Word of God, by baptism, by the laying-on of hands.[1] The Twelve were the witnesses of the life, death, and resurrection of Christ. With the assistance of the Spirit, they were made the successors of Christ. Their word was his Word; they became the transmitters of revelation, the imparters of truth.[2] "As the Father sent the Son and gave him a mission and ministry, so also the Son sends the apostles in the power of the Holy Spirit and gives them a mission and ministry, transmitting to them the power of the Holy Spirit on the part of the Father."[3]

The apostles, therefore, were signs and instruments of Christ; and their successors today are signs and instruments of Christ ever living, active, and present in the world.[4] "Whoever welcomes an apostle or a minister as an ambassador sent by Christ and whoever listens to him as to one proclaiming Christ's word, welcomes and listens to Christ himself. To reject him is to reject Christ and the Father who sent him."[5]

The body of the Twelve is the nucleus of the Church, both as a people in continuity with the twelve tribes of

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[1] Thurian, "Christ, the Holy Spirit and the Ministry," p. 14.

[2] VUT, pp. 56-58; RPV, p. 27; LTM, p. 62.

[3] OB, p. 60.   [4] VUT, pp. 58-59.   [5] OB, p. 69.

Israel, and as transmitter of the Word and sacraments of Christ.[1] They are the first missionaries, founders, and pastors, and insofar as they convey the Word of God under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, it is clear that their mission remains unique and permanent, and cannot be handed on. This is a living and permanent witness in the Church. Thus, the apostles are living and present here and now in the apostolic teaching of the New Testament, in the communion of saints, and in witness to the inspired Word of God.[2]

The Twelve represent the whole Church as a people and also the Church as an institution, the ministry.

> In the twelve we recognize all the laity and all the ministers of the church; the laity as disciples and witnesses, the deacons as servants and assistants of Christ, the pastors as ministers of the word and the sacraments, the bishops as pastors jointly of the universal church and severally of the local churches.[3]

Theirs is the ministry of reconciliation and unity, exercised in the Church since the beginning. Each of the apostles, besides giving unity to and ruling his local church, keeps it in communion with other churches throughout the world and thus renders ecumenical unity vital.[4]

Apostolic Succession

The apostles, who were looking for the imminent return of Christ, gave at first no thought to a succession in time. Finally, however, it became apparent to them that a succession was necessary. The extension of the Church in time requires the extension of the apostolate. With the calling of Paul, Jesus Christ invites the apostles to extend the ministry of the apostolate itself.[1] It is clear, as we have seen, that as founders of the Church, as eyewitnesses, as having full power and as inspired by the Holy Spirit, their mission remains unique and cannot be handed on. But "that part of their ministry which consisted in watching over the transmission of the Gospel and the unity of the Church had to be continued; for the authentic deposit of faith had to be preserved in its accuracy, and the Churches' unity in truth and charity maintained."[2]

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[1] LTM, p. 62.

[2] OB, p. 72; VUT, p. 71.

[3] LTM, p. 62.

[4] VUT, p. 24; OB, p. 60.

Thus there is a real and concrete continuity in the Church. The apostles, continually present in the Church in their successors, guarantee the uninterrupted succession of the ministry to preserve faith and unity.[3]

In the eyes of Roman Catholic ecclesiology and its doctrine of apostolic succession, the churches of the Reform hold an uneasy position. In the view of the strict traditionalist they are an anomaly.[4] Thurian's theology of apostolic succession can, therefore, be a potent ecumenical contribution and force for renewal. Again, however, as with so many of his key ideas, the thoughts on this matter are scattered and disorganized. They are rather impressions of apostolic succession than an organized presentation or definition.

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[1] VUT, pp. 63-64; OB, p. 73.

[2] VUT, p. 64.

[3] VUT, pp. 35-36; LTM, p. 109.

[4] Thurian, "Le dogme de l'assomption," p. 41. Catholic doctrine, under the influence of the ecumenical currents of today, is continually re-appraising the position of the Protestant and Anglican Churches vis à vis apostolic succession. The line is softer; the question more open than ever. This is why this section of Thurian's theology is so important.

First of all, it is clear that succession is primarily the work of the Holy Spirit. It is the Spirit who unites the apostles with their successors, and this through the ordination of ministers.[1] On what precisely "apostolic succession" means, the churches disagree. Some hold it to be faithfulness to apostolic doctrine; others demand absolute physical succession in ordination.[2]

Succession, according to Thurian, is not solely an uninterrupted succession of bishops, nor their unanimous consensus.[3] He is careful, however, to use the word solely. For each viewpoint must appreciate and learn from the other.[4] It is physical succession in the sense that the new minister is inserted "into the succession of ministries of the Church, guaranteed by the fidelity of Jesus Christ."[5] Thurian does not reject, therefore, the doctrine of physical succession, but he really stands on the side of faithfulness--not only to apostolic doctrine, but to the actual Church of the New Testament:

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[1] LTM, p. 109.

[2] OB, p. 86. "Calvin rejects the notion that the 'church exists wherever bishops succeed one another.' [ICR, IV.ii.3] This is much too organizational a concept of apostolic succession, too mechanistic, too preoccupied with mere structural continuity, and not sufficiently preoccupied with that deeper continuity which is founded in purity of doctrine." (Kilian McDonnell, John Calvin, the Church, and the Eucharist, p. 150).

[3] Thurian, "Le dogme de l'assomption," p. 19.

[4] OB, p. 86.

[5] Thurian, "L'ordination des pasteurs," p. 203.

> It is God's will that there always exist in his church a ministry to pursue the work of the apostles who were sent by the Son in the power of the Spirit. This mission is authentic only if it conforms to the mission of the apostles, to Christ's intention in sending the Twelve and the Seventy and to the apostles' intention when they sent the first ministers of the church.[1]

The Church, therefore, must recognize that its faith conforms to the New Testament, and that the Church itself conforms to the Church of the Apostles as that Church recognized that it sprang from the Word of God.[2]

Further, a bishop or minister is in the apostolic succession

> inasmuch as he is the guardian of the apostolic deposit of faith, accurately transmits this deposit, and is in communion with the other bishops, as a sign of universal Church unity. It is on this level that any discussion of apostolic succession must take place.[3]

Thurian sees apostolic succession as possibly more of an ecclesiastical fact than an ecclesiological doctrine.[4] One does not refuse, moreover, to other churches (e.g., the Society of Friends) who do not possess historical continuity or a ministerial concept, an efficacious and holy ministry in the power of the Holy Spirit. For they are bound in some way to the Church of Christ, and the Christ who founded the Church and the Holy Spirit who renders ministries efficacious and blesses them are one.[1]

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[1] OB, p. 85.

[2] Thurian, "Le dogme de l'assomption," p. 19.

[3] VUT, p. 106.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 45. Since the apostles originally had no thought of succession, the succession simply happened, and has later been appreciated and explained by the Church and by theology. Thurian apparently does not see it as taught by Jesus or the integral college of apostles. Then, too, this statement could be apologetic in tone, justifying the Reform in Catholic eyes.

Summary

Apostolic succession is guaranteed first of all by the continuing presence of the Holy Spirit, handed down through ordination, second by the fidelity of Jesus Christ who receives the minister into the existing succession. That ministry is within the apostolic succession if it is faithful to its mission, its faith, and its essence, as witnessed in the New Testament, and if it is in communion with all other bishops in guarding and transmitting faithfully the Word of God, the truth of faith, and unity in love.[2]

Ministries in the Church Today

Methods of Approach

As Thurian reviews the basic elements in the structure of ministries which ensure their essentially Christian character, he sees the necessity of several kinds of ministry: a ministry of founding churches and binding them together, a local form of episcopal ministry, a ministry of presbyters, a ministry of deacons, and other ministries adapted to the needs of the times.[1]

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[1] Thurian, "Intercommunion," VC, XVII (1963), p. 206.

[2] "Other bishops" may refer to "collective bishops." See below, p. 221. Ecumenical and practical difficulties are evidently raised by the requirement that each bishop be in communion with all his brother bishops. This problem will be treated more fully below, in Chapters VIII and IX.

Beginning the study of the several ministries with presbyters rather than with bishops is an accurate reflection of Thurian's approach and focus. For the focus of Thurian's Church ministry is a college of presbyters; bishops emerge from this college. The bishop is essentially a presbyter-pastor: "A bishop does not receive a new pastoral ministry: his pastoral office is given a broader territorial expansion and a greater ecumenical responsibility."[2] "The bishop is the pastor of a local or regional Church."[3]

The focus of Roman Catholic ecclesiology is the bishop (or college of bishops), who are the real pastors, and who have created or delegated pastors of local parishes.[4] Thurian agrees that the approach is different:

> So it's more an historical approach to the question. I would agree that now we can begin with the bishops; but it's our biblical and historical approach which leads us to begin with the ministry of the presbyters, of the pastors, with the bishop coming from them as a president, and, after that, as the first order in the hierarchy. There is no real dogmatic problem, just an historical approach.[5]

It may be that there is no real dogmatic _problem_, but the difference in approach can have far-reaching consequences in one's total conception of ministry, and indeed of the Church. Is the ministry (doctrinal, pastoral, sacramental, authoritative) vested essentially in a college of bishops of the universal Church, or in colleges of presbyters in each local church? Is the government and structure of the Church collegiate-unified, federal-congregational, or absolutely centralized? Is the bishop, a product of development of ministry, equally subject to being "phased out" in future development? These questions can be the material for fruitful ecumenical dialogue. Each viewpoint must respect, and learn from, the other.

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[1] See OB, pp. 78-79.

[2] VUT, p. 78; Thurian, "Situation du sacerdoce," p. 266.

[3] Thurian, "Situation du sacerdoce," p. 265.

[4] This is the approach reflected, for example, in the arrangement of _Lumen Gentium_.

[5] Interview with Max Thurian, at Taizé, December 27, 1966.

The Ministry of Pastors

There is a necessity for a ministry of presbyters, the symbol in the local church of the apostolic collegiality, which diversifies and controls the episcopal ministry.[1] Thus the presbyterial or pastoral ministry is a state recognized by the Church and sanctioned by the laying-on of hands; it is a function performed for the building up of the Church: proclamation of the Word, administration of the sacraments, and exercise of discipline and authority.[2] The pastor is a shepherd to whom is confided a flock which he nourishes and leads.[3] He is responsible for the fidelity of the teaching of the Church to the Word of God.[4] Those who are today called "pastors" exercise their ministry at the parish level, in a community, or in a job.[1]

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[1] OB, p. 79.

[2] Thurian, "Situation du sacerdoce," p. 268; OB, pp. 74-75.

[3] Thurian, "Situation du sacerdoce," p. 265.

[4] LTM, p. 11.

The pastor in the Church is a minister and sign of Christ the prophet, priest, and king. He preaches and teaches the Word of God, celebrates the Eucharist by presenting the memorial of Christ and invoking the Holy Spirit in order that God may actualize the mystery of his redemption, intercedes for the whole Church, incorporates new faithful into the Body of Christ by baptism, consecrates them by confirmation, fights sin and evil by absolution and the imposition of hands on the sick, blesses marriage and every human situation, and directs the spiritual life of his flock.[2]

New Ideas for the Future

Essentially, the pastors make up a college, presided over by a bishop. This collegial nature of the pastorate should enable them to work closely together and even to live in close touch. Thurian proposes three quite interesting and original ideas on the pastorate, drawn from their collegial nature and the constitution of modern society. He proposes, first, that they form communities; second, that they work at a secular occupation; and third, that they become less clericalized-intellectualized, and that the training of pastors be quite changed:

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[1] Thurian, "Situation du sacerdoce," p. 265.

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 265-66; LTM, p. 112; InET, p. 3. A complete discussion of the ministry of the faithful and of the ordained ministers as prophet, priest and king is found above, Chapter VI.

> The evolution of modern society from rural to urban life demands new reflection on the subject of the collegial presbyterate. It is becoming less and less desirable that a presbyter live alone in a village. We must rather hope for the constitution of presbyteral communities, which will facilitate the ministry in common and fram which the presbyters can radiate over a region. This type of presbyteral community is still more desirable in the city. Collegial life of the presbyters permits a better distribution of tasks, according to the particular charisms of each: one will devote himself to youth, another to students, a third one to workers, a fourth one to the liberal professions, etc. One will be a better catechist; another will be a good liturgist; a third one will have a taste for theology and teaching, etc.[1]

The ideas have obvious advantages. However, it seems much more weighted with problems. In the experience of the Christian Church, communities of families have simply not worked. Indeed, this was the experience of Taizé, which originally attempted to gather married Christians into a close community existence and eventually changed to accept the plan of a celibate community. Nor does the community plan really seem to be a consequence of either pastoral collegiality or modern urban living. The pastors can function as a college for the governance of the local church quite well without living actually together (as do the bishops for the universal Church). Urban living, in fact, would demand a different concept of community from this: the pastors united with men and women of all vocations, Christian and non-Christian alike, in cooperative community living. Modern experience shows that those with special gifts will use them well without common living; for pastors today, in all churches, are noted for their work with youth, with the poor, with labor, with teaching, etc. An experimental community of married pastors, however, would be most worthwhile; effects and results of great value may arise from such an experience.

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[1] OB, p. 82.

Thurian proposes that in modern secularized life the pastors should hold a professional job: "To again obtain true contact between pastors and laymen, it may well be necessary that in the future the majority of the church's ministers have an ordinary job by which they can earn enough to pay their personal expenses in keeping with the majority of men."[1]

Closely allied to this idea is the proposal for an education of the minister which is less clerical and less intellectual, and for much the same reason: that he re-establish his close bond to the layman, to all of the people.

> This does not mean that presbyters should not have a good biblical and theological formation; but this formation could be shorter and concentrated more on essentials, rather than being spread out to cover a university formation. A more advanced and more technical theological formation for some, who have a taste and ability for it, could lead them to a ministry of theological teaching. . . .[2]

Both the plan of daily secular work and the shortened, more basic training are proposed in order to avoid an injurious "clericalization."[3] The ideas have many merits; Thurian is not the first to propose them. A discussion, study, and experiment in these areas would surely be most fruitful.

Collegiality

The pastors together of the local Church form a college. A collegial concept of the ministry has its origin in the college of the Twelve and in that of the seventy disciples. To preach the Gospel, Christ did not send isolated individuals; he constituted the apostolic college, and through this college he governs his Church.[1] The call of Paul showed that this college was to be extended, both through space and in time. The pastors today, as the presbyters of the New Testament, are the symbol in the local church of apostolic collegiality; the whole Church remains profoundly collegial.[2]

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[1] OB, p. 149. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 83. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 106.

In the Church of the New Testament, as we have seen, the distinction between presbyter and episcopos is not clear, if it really exists at all. Frequently the presbyters designated one of their number to assume the episcopal function: the apostolic ministry of authority and unity. But the ministry of the Church, whether or not it has a president or is heirarchical, necessarily remains a college. If there is no bishop, as in churches of presbyterian organization, the college of pastors acts collectively in the government of the Church, the transmission of the Gospel and the ordination of new ministers. In churches with an episcopal structure, the bishop acts surrounded by his college of pastors, and not independently.[3]

In recent Catholic theological thought, the re-emphasis on collegiality--the pope joined with the episcopal college, the bishop joined with the presbyterium--has contributed greatly to ecumenical rapport.[1] "Because for us [the Reform], the relation between the Bishops and the Pope in the government of the universal Church is the main problem, the idea of *the collegiality of the Bishops with the Pope is of great value for the dialogue*."[2]

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[1] Thurian, "L'ordination des pasteurs," p. 202; VUT, p. 59.

[2] OB, p. 79; Thurian, "L'ordination des pasteurs," p. 206.

[3] Thurian, "Situation du sacerdoce," p. 268; "L'ordination des pasteurs," p. 206; "L'organisation du ministère," p. 29; VUT, pp. 78-79.

The Ministry of Bishops

> The Reformed Church, following the Lutheran lead, is proceeding toward a more episcopal conception of the government of the Christian community. They are moving little by little from a presbyterian-synodal ecclesiology (government by presbyters united in a synod), to a presbyterian-synodal-episcopal organization (the same type of government, but under the presidency and direction of a bishop).[3]

Thurian, in fact, goes much further: he states that the authority of the episcopate is necessary in each church; there cannot be the real church without the exercise of the episcopate as a service of the truth for unity.[4]

As we have noted, in the eyes of the Reformed tradition the bishop is a pastor (presbyter) who has received not a *new* ministry, but a greater extension and responsibility. "Presbyter" characterizes the bishop as a man of wide experience in the Christian life; "bishop" denotes his function as shepherd, pastor, superintendent, guardian. In other words, his state is pastor, his function bishop.[1]

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[1] RPV, p. 71.

[2] "Vatican II and Ecumenical Dialogue," p. 25. Italics his.

[3] Thurian, "Spiritualité protestante," p. 380.

[4] Interview with Max Thurian, at Taizé, December 27, 1966.

The bishop is the sign of Christ, the invisible bishop always living and governing the Church.[2] He is the sign and instrument of the apostles, who continue to govern the Church, to found new churches, to ordain new ministers, and to build up unity through their successors the bishops.[3]

Like all ministers of the Church, the bishop is essentially a minister of the Word of God and of the sacraments.[4] Through this ministry he governs the Church; he is the pastor of a local city church, governing it in conjunction with a college of presbyters and supported by deacons.[5] A bishop obeys his vocation by accepting the first place in the Christian community, and by truly serving his brothers in being for them the sign of order and discipline.[6]

The bishops, like the apostles whose successors they are, are obliged to be the guardians of Scripture and the promoters of tradition. They accurately transmit the authentic deposit of faith. But they can do this only in communion with the other bishops; this is the only limit to their freedom:

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[1] OB, p. 77; Thurian, "L'organisation du ministère," p. 28.

[2] Thurian, "L'organisation du ministère, " p. 31.

[3] VUT, pp. 71, 77; Thurian, "Situation du sacerdoce," p. 267.

[4] VUT, p. 106; Thurian, "Unity of the Ministry," p. 297.

[5] OB, p. 77; Thurian, "L'organisation du ministère," p. 37.

[6] CFS, p. 106.

visible communion with the other local churches throughout the world.[1]

Further, the bishop

> . . . is the minister of the church's internal government and God's steward (Tit. 1:7). He ministers the teaching of the word of God; for this he must be attached to sound teaching and conform to doctrine (Tit. 1:9). He is the minister of the church's external relations: he should be hospitable. . ., and non-Christians (those outside) should be able to recognize his human qualities (I Tim 3:2-7; Tit. 1:8).[2]

The sacraments of ordination and confirmation are reserved to the bishop, in order to manifest the presence of the apostles and the ecumenical unity of which the bishop is the representative par excellence.[3] The consecration of bishops by other bishops is a sign of the universal communion of all churches, in the absence of which there can be no full comprehension of the Scriptures and only a partial transmission of the Gospel.[4]

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[1] VUT, pp. 24, 64, 106; RPV, p. 27; Thurian, "Unity of the Ministry," p. 299. Cf. OB, p. 107.

[2] OB, pp. 77-78.

[3] VUT, pp. 77-78; CON, p. 98; LTM, p. 110. In the latter reference, the translator has: "The minister of ordination is an apostle, always present in the church, whether single or collective." The French, on the other hand, reads: "Le ministre de l'ordination est l'apôtre, toujours présent dans l'Eglise, *par l'intermédiaire de son successeur, l'évêque*, unique or collégial." (Thurian, *Amour et vérité se rencontrent: Simple exposé de la foi chrétienne* [Taizé: Les Presses de Taizé, 1964], p. 183). The phrase in italics, essential to the meaning and import of the passage, has unfortunately been omitted from the English.

The questions of ordination as a sacrament and of "collective bishops" are treated farther on in this chapter.

[4] VUT, p. 106.

A Ministry of Unity

The ministry of the bishop is neither a ministry of authority, nor a doctrinal ministry, nor a sacramental ministry in the first place; it is essentially the pastoral ministry of Word and sacraments ordered for unity in view of charity, for a greater fullness in truth.[1]

> The bishop is the minister of unity in the local church, and of the local church in ecumenical unity; he manifests the presence of the universal Church in the local churches, and the presence of the local church in the universal, ecumenical and council Church. This is his essential function.[2]

The bishop, then, has the primary task to keep in unity the members of the Body of Christ, to make the local church unity agree with the unity of the universal Church.[3] This activity, which Thurian calls the "ministry of catholicity," has been exercised in the Church from the outset.[4]

Missionary, Resident, and Collective Bishops

Thurian makes the interesting proposal that there be two distinct kinds of bishops: missionary and resident. The missionary bishops would have as their charge the mission and renewal of the Church:

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[1] Thurian, "Unity of the Ministry," p. 297. See also VUT, pp. 64, 75, 106.

[2] Thurian, "Unity of the Ministry," p. 297. See also Thurian, "Situation du sacerdoce," p. 265.

[3] Thurian, "Unity of the Ministry," p. 297. Also, interview with Max Thurian, at Taizé, December 27, 1966.

[4] VUT, p. 24. The decisive and lasting disagreement between the churches as to the ministry is to be found in the acceptance or refusal of the episcopal ministry, understood not only as a chairmanship but as a ministry of unity (Thurian, "Unity of the Ministry," p. 295).

> Like the apostles and their collaborators, they should be itinerant and at the service of all the churches. Their work would be to stimulate the foundation of new churches, to encourage renewal in every domain of the Christian life and to establish bonds between the various churches. Their ministry would be one of conferences, sessions and retreats to convey information on the great modern problems to those responsible for the churches. Their function would manifest the church's primordial missionary character and the necessity of its ecumenical unity.[1]

The resident bishop is a pastor of the pastors. He governs the local church, together with his presbyters, and exercises there the ministry of Word, sacrament, and unity; in short, the ministry as fully described above for the bishop.

According to Thurian, the college of presbyters may act as a "collective bishop." Most frequently, the churches have a bishop, acting in and with the college of presbyters. But it is possible that in the apostolic church the laying-on of hands might have been given by a college of presbyters, instituted by an apostle and acting as a collective bishop.[2] And this custom endures in some churches today:

> In Churches of presbyterian organization, it is important to emphasize the episcopal character of the college of ordained pastors acting collectively in the government of the Church in the transmission of the gospel and in the ordination of new ministers, normally under the presidency of a superintendent (moderator or regional president).[3]

There is no doubt that Thurian has contributed here some very exciting ideas. His theology of the episcopate is not without problems: must all bishops be in communion with all others (for clearly this is not so, either now or historically)? Can the college of presbyters truly function totally as a bishop, or must this charge reside in one man? What are the ecumenical implications of all these thoughts and proposals? The last two chapters of this study will discuss these problems in more detail and attempt solutions and conclusions.

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[1] OB, p. 81. See also VUT, p. 69.

[2] VUT, p. 76; LTM, pp. 109-10. Cf. I Tim. 4:14.

[3] VUT, p. 78.

The Ministry of Peter:
Primacy and Infallibility in the Church

There is no ecumenical problem more obvious than the role of the papacy. A clear and, it would seem, ineradicable division exists on this issue between the Catholic Church and the churches of the Reform. Obviously, Thurian must face this difficulty. He does so through an historical, and then an ecumenical-theological approach.

The New Testament evidence is clear that Peter was the first of the apostles, but one with them all. His ministry was the administration of the household of God and the duty of confirming his brethren. Can this ministry be handed on?

The ancient church very early granted primacy in effect and by right to the Church of Rome and to its bishop. It was a practical primacy, with a view to the maintenance of catholic unity.[1]

Is there primacy in the Church today? There can be no question of monarchy, of a centralized papal administration to maintain unity exteriorly. For the ancient church did not recognize a primacy of the bishop of Rome as sovereign pontiff of the universal Church, but rather a primacy of the church of Rome and its bishop. This latter distinction is hard at first to appreciate; however, consider the meaning within the total context of Thurian's theology of primacy: the bishop of Rome, in perpetuity of succession, does not _rule over_ the whole Church throughout the world. He governs the church in Rome along with his presbyters and the Church universal along with his brother bishops, as a college. But the Church of Rome (as a total Christian community), along with, naturally, its bishop, exercises a _primacy_.

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[1] Thurian, "Unity of the Ministry," p. 300; "Les conséquences du dogme," p. 111.

This primacy is a _ministry_. First of all, the ministry of the primatial church is to be a _typical_ church, a pattern for unity, to which the other churches could look to keep in communion with one another. The bishop of this church is the _model_ bishop. The primacy of the church and its bishop is at the service of living unity, conceived as the life of Christ and the experience of his love in the universal community of the faithful.[1]

Today, the part of the typical local church, in ancient times Rome, can be played in turn by different churches in which the Holy Spirit manifests his power.[2]

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[1] _Ibid_.

[2] Thurian, "Unity of the Ministry," p. 301. Thurian had such admiration for Pope John XXIII that he did not hesitate in this article to say that under this pontiff, Rome had again assumed the role of the typical (primatial) Church.

> Is there a ministry today of a pastor of the pastors?
>
> Is this ministry transmissible, or did it concern only the person of Peter among the Twelve? The traditions differ on this point. . . . According to some, each bishop participates to a degree in Peter's ministry in the charge and service of strengthening the ministers of the church confided to him. According to others, there is in the church a bishop who has the charge and service of strengthening his brother bishops.[1]

If the primacy is not to be monarchic, does the bishop-primate govern the Church in any sense other than as an equal in the episcopal college? For the churches of the Reform, the relationship between the pope and the bishops in the Catholic Church is a great problem. The ideas of Vatican II on the collegiality of bishops with the pope is of great ecumenical value, but much dialogue remains to be carried out.[2]

Another problem is the authority of the pope as doctor of the Church:

> It is necessary besides that the two orders of the ministry, charismatic and institutional, be well distinguished, for if one man is able to unite in himself the charisms of the theologian and the understanding of the bishop, this is not always the case; and nothing is more dangerous for the life of the Church and her teaching than that the bishop--even if he is the bishop of Rome--be considered *ipso facto* as the authorized doctor of his diocese or of catholicity.[3]

Thus we can see that Thurian has touched upon all aspects of the question of primacy: the role of the primatial church as model and type, as source and servant of unity, and of the primatial bishop as pastor of the bishops ("confirm his brethren"), governor of the Church, doctor of the Church, and as one with his fellow bishops in the college. There remains, of course, the serious problem of infallibility.

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[1] OB, p. 71.

[2] "Vatican II and Ecumenical Dialogue," p. 25.

[3] Thurian, "Développement du dogme," p. 156.

Infallibility

Protestantism does not accept the infallibility of the magisterium. The ministry which serves the Word of God is always an instrument, always human; the Word alone possesses infallibility.[1] Nor is even an ecumenical council infallible, for the Church herself, although holy, is not infallible.[2]

To be sure, one could not expect Thurian to accept the Roman Catholic doctrine of infallibility. He writes rather harshly of the doctrine in an early article,[3] and has pointed out from time to time the bitter disappointment of the First Vatican Council.[4] He is also quick to point out that the Second Vatican Council has made a great advance, although this is mainly in the area of the relation of pope to bishops and in the magisterium as a service to the Word of God, whereas the Council neither explicated nor "corrected" the doctrine of infallibility itself.[1]

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[1] RPV, pp. 51-52.

[2] Thurian, "Les conséquences du dogme," pp. 51, 110. See above, Chapter IV, passim. However, "it may be said that Reformed theology is open to a certain notion of doctrinal infallibility, which we might be able to state in this manner: the Church ought to be certain of the truth of her Credo. . . if it is based on a study and an exegesis of the Scriptures in the ecumenical community." (Ibid., p. 377).

[3] Thurian, "Le dogme de l'assomption," p. 10.

[4] Ibid.; interview with Max Thurian, at Taizé, December 28, 1966.

Thurian would temper the affirmations of infallibility by showing that the pope is infallible only in communion with the universal Church, and only so far as he is the expression of the faith of the whole Church.[2] "When we speak of the personal infallibility of the pope, it doesn't mean that he is infallible as a person. It means that he has the proper charisma to act on some occasions to confirm his brothers: bishops, priests, and lay people."[3]

It is doubtful if these latter views represent the actual notion of infallibility as Thurian, within the Reformed Church, sees it. They are much more likely to be his concept of the Catholic views as he believes that Catholics ought rightly to understand them. Nevertheless, the whole direction and tone here shows a desire to reach, through going beyond the older more rigid polarization, a common ground for the future.

Certainly, as Thurian says a number of times, this problem of infallibility in the Church remains a problem which ought to be studied in ecumenical dialogue. Roman Catholic and Protestant ecclesiology will have to take up the problem again and find new ways to explain it. This will be very important for the unity of divided Christians.[1]

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[1] Interviews with Max Thurian, at Taizé, December 27 and 28, 1966; RPV, p. 52.

[2] Thurian, "Le dogme de l'assomption," p. 10.

[3] Interview with Max Thurian, at Taizé, December 28, 1966.

The Ministry of Deacons

A ministry of deacons, sorely neglected, is essential in the Church, in order to bring out the character of ministry as service, after the example of the service of Jesus Christ. Deacons are assistants in the pastoral and episcopal ministry. Alongside the pastors and bishops, deacons exercise the cure of souls and the duty of visiting and of hospitality. They can assist the pastor in preaching, in the celebration of baptism, in the distribution of communion, and in all other tasks for which they have been delegated.[2]

Thurian regards the diaconate as composed of laymen:

> There are many laymen who are called to take on responsibilities in the Christian community, in addition to their family, professional and social life. At a given moment in his life in the church, a layman who is responsible for a spiritual charge quite naturally becomes a servant who can be counted on definitively. He has been proven in his responsibility and in his life (I Tim. 3:10). It is only normal that at this stage the church propose to him that he become a minister, that it accept him as a deacon and ordain him in the diaconal ministry.[3]

In this regard, we have already noted that Thurian wishes monks (and religious in general) to be considered laymen. He regards the deacon, too, as a layman, despite ordination. It would seem, therefore, that his distinction between clergy and lay is between pastors, including of course bishops (clergy), and all of the other faithful, including evidently deacons and religious. In the broader sense, however, all are lay (laos) because all are of the people of God. As ministers to the world, all are equally consecrated to the ministry; as ministers to the Church, there are pastors, and those who serve the people and the pastors but who remain laymen, despite ordination, which cannot therefore be taken as the distinguishing mark of clergy. In this concept he differs from ordinary Catholic thought, but on a matter which has very little doctrinal importance.

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[1] RPV, p. 52; VUT, p. 130; interview with Max Thurian, at Taizé, December 27, 1966.

[2] OB, pp. 79, 84; Thurian, "Situation du sacerdoce," pp. 266, 268. Those whom one today calls "presbyterial counsellors" or "elders" have the diaconal ministry (Ibid.).

[3] OB, p. 84.

The Diversity of Ministries

No ministerial structure should be so closed or exclusive that it cannot allow for charismatic ministries, gifts distributed by the Holy Spirit. The Church must recognize and order these charismatic gifts, geared to the needs of every age and given to serve the common good.[1] "In this light the church recognizes that God has given to and established in it primarily the apostles, secondly the prophets, thirdly the doctors and finally the gifts of power together with the charisms of healing, helping, governing and speaking in tongues."[2]

Although the charismatic and institutional orders of the ministry need to be carefully distinguished (else there would be danger to the Church), nevertheless:

> no contradiction can be possible between a charismatic or pneumatic concept of the church and a ministerial or insti-

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[1] Ibid., pp. 65, 79.

[2] Ibid., p. 65.

> tutional one. . . . The ecumenical truth of ecclesiology is found in an equilibrium between a just recognition of charisms, the liberty of the Spirit, the prophetic Spirit and the diversity of the ministries on the one hand, and a healthy concept of the ministry, the institution, continuity and ordination on the other.[1]

Thurian mentions only very briefly the problem of women in the ministry. He is non-commital, posing questions rather than giving statements. However, by the tone and direction of the questions, he seems to favor the exercise of ministry by women (specifically as deaconess, prophet, and a "ministry of widows").[2] The issue is, of course, rather hotly debated, and he no doubt wishes to avoid taking a definite stand in an area still fresh and without clear shape.

Ordination

Pastors, bishops, and deacons are ordained to their ministry. But ministry is not purely a delegation from the Church; it is a gift of God. It pertains to the Church to discern these gifts, to be the voice of the vocation.[1]

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[1] OB, pp. 66-67. Thurian here is obviously proposing an ecumenical bridge between the ministerial, or more traditional churches, and the charismatic churches of the Pentecostal movement, the Friends, and others. It is an area of ecumenism crying out for attention, which it is only just beginning to receive.

[2] Thurian, "Christ, the Holy Spirit and the Ministry," p. 25. Some of his more signigicant questions on this matter are: "In the New Testament do we not meet with women who pray and prophesy in services of worship held in the primitive Church in just the same way as men did? . . . Have not the churches neglected the ministry of women which includes so many functions in the service of the word of God and of the Church?" (Ibid.)

It is interesting, and perhaps significant in view of Thurian's ecumenical attitude, that in his publication of this mimeographed document as the major part of Le pain unique (1967) [of which The One Bread is the English translation], all of this material on the ordination of women was omitted.

> But this intimate and personal vocation from God must be recognized, built and consecrated by the church; this is a necessary condition for its exercise as a ministry accepted by the Christian community as coming from God. The Body of Christ must recognize that some of its members are established to express the service of its Head, Christ.[2]

The ordination of a minister for the Church of Christ is a prayer to the Holy Spirit which accords the gifts necessary to ministry; it is a legitimization, that is, it is the sign that these gifts are really given upon the demand of the Church. It is the dedication to God of a new servant, and a begetting: a transmission of life and the power of the Spirit.[3]

The ordination or consecration of a bishop, besides being prayer, legitimization, dedication and begetting, also designates a pastor as head of a local or regional church and blesses him for the exercise of that charge.[4] And the deacon is marked by the character of assistant to the pastoral ministry while also receiving this prayer, legitimizing, dedication and begetting.[5]

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[1] Thurian, "L'ordination des pasteurs," p. 201. Thurian sees indications in Scripture that the ministers in the apostolic church were not elected, but rather designated with a gesture of the hand, signifying the gift of the Holy Spirit: Acts 19:8; 20:17, 28. (Thurian, "L'organisation du ministère," p. 27).

[2] OB, p. 85.

[3] Thurian, "Situation du sacerdoce," p. 266; VUT, p. 78; OB, p. 87.

[4] Thurian, "Situation de sacerdoce," p. 266; VUT, p. 78. Note that a bishop does not receive a new pastoral ministry: see above, pp. 217-18.

[5] Thurian, "Situation du sacerdoce," p. 266; VUT, p. 78.

Consecration and Character

Ordination, therefore, implies a consecration, but not a "sacralization" in that the minister is "holier" than other Christians.[1] This consecration, which does not transform his human nature or make it holier, nevertheless has a definitive character.[2] "The laying-on of hands at ordination confers an indelible character and imparts a gift of the Holy Spirit which the Lord, in his faithfulness, will not revoke."[3]

There is some ambiguity in Thurian's writings on this permanent consecration. He refers to it, in the quotation immediately above as "an indelible character," as he does in "Les conséquences du dogme" (p. 112). But the word _character_ is used equivocally in "Situation du sacerdoce": "Consecration has a definitive character. . .," where the _consecration_, not the man, has a character--probably in the sense of _characteristic_ or _quality_.[4] In another article, he says, "This imposition of hands. . . gives a _permanent_ _charism_ of God."[5] _Charism_, of course, has far greater connotations than _character_. It is even more interesting that just a few pages before in the same article, he deplores the Catholic deformation whereby, among other changes, _confidence_ in the Holy Spirit has become character. Indeed, he clearly labels "clerical character" as false.[1] Finally, translation tends also to confuse the issue.

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[1] Thurian, "L'ordination des pasteurs," p. 200.

[2] Thurian, "Les conséquences du dogme," p. 112; "Situation du sacerdoce," p. 267.

[3] MrCl, p. 101.

[4] Thurian, "Situation du sacerdoce," p. 267.

[5] Thurian, "L'ordination des pasteurs," p. 206.

Is there a way out of this maze? A few suggestions may help. First of all, Thurian is of course opposed to any materialistic or purely juridical view of sacramental character. In this, he wishes to prevent the historical abuses of the doctrine in the Roman Catholic tradition from repeating themselves. Second, he wishes to avoid any impression that the human nature of the man ordained is in any way altered or "sacralized." Third, he wishes it to have a meaning deeply significant of the work of the Spirit in and through the pastor--thus, charism. In sum, ordination is a permanent consecration, which is in reality the recognition and designation by the Church of a vocation, which is a permanent charism, in the man ordained.

The Sacramentality and the Minister of Ordination

> The laying-on of hands at ordination is the efficacious sign of the gifts of the Holy Spirit granted to the minister for the sake of his ministry. God joins in this action of the church and he gives what he has promised, the power of his Spirit. The laying-on of hands is a sacramental act that effects what it signifies.[2]

Christ is not restricted to ordained ministers, but ordination is "indispensable for transmitting the Holy Spirit as uniting the apostles with their successors and their collaboration in faithful guardianship of the deposit of faith."[3]

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[1] Ibid., pp. 203-04. [2] LTM, p. 113. [3] VUT, p. 76.

Ordination is celebrated by the laying-on of hands, accompanied by a preaching or liturgical proclamation. It is really the whole Church which ordains and consecrates new ministers. The sign, minister, and instrument of the Church in ordaining is an apostle, always present in the bishop, his successor, acting in and with the college of presbyters, apostolic collaborators. Whether the bishop be single or "collective," it is absolutely necessary to guard in ordination this collegial character.[1] And finally, because ministry is a gift from Christ and not by consent of the people of God, and because it is a begetting of new life given down generation after generation, no laymen but only pastors may share in the laying-on of hands for new pastors in the Church.[2]

Summary

The Church, all the people of God, exercises a ministry to the world. In the heart of this royal and prophetic priesthood of all the faithful there is a ministry for the Church. This ministry is a service of the Word, the sacraments and authority, for the building up of the Church in truth and unity. The minister, in imitation of Christ, whose sign and instrument he is, is a servant of the whole Church.

Ministry has existed in many and varied forms in the Church. It was originally modelled on the synagogue, but yet distinctively Christian. The churches were governed by apostles and by a college of presbyters, often presided over by an episcopos. The many and varied functions in the local churches were carried out by apostles, prophets, doctors, presbyters, bishops, and deacons. During their lifetime, the apostles, founders of the Church and heirs of Christ, represented the whole Church and governed it.

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[1] Thurian, "L'ordination des pasteurs," p. 206; LTM, p. 110; VUT, pp. 76-79; "Situation du sacerdoce," p. 266.

[2] Thurian, "Situation du sacerdoce," p. 266; VUT, p. 79.

As the apostles died, the bishops assumed more importance in the Church, acting as the successors of the apostles in governing, guarding the deposit of faith and transmitting the tradition and the power of the Spirit. There is apostolic succession in the Church, guaranteed by the continuing presence of the Spirit, and proved by the faithfulness of the ministry and the Church to the apostolic teaching and the Church of the New Testament.

The focal point of ministry in the Church is the college of presbyters governing the local church. Presiding over the pastors is the bishop, who together with his fellow bishops governs the Church universal. Thus, collegiality is essential to the Church.

The pastor is the minister in the Church of Word, sacrament, and authority. He preaches, teaches, celebrates the sacraments, fights sin and evil, blesses and consecrates. It may be that in the future the pastors will realize their collegiality and their place in a modern urban civilization by living together in communities and by holding a job like the laymen. Also in order to be more closely bound to the layman, the pastor may in time have a much less intellectualized training. All of these proposals will put a check to the dangerous tendency of clericalization.

The bishop is essentially a pastor, but with a greater territorial extension and responsibility; his state is presbyter, and his function is bishop. The essential ministry of the bishops is that of building up the Church and the churches in unity. As successors of the apostles, they have also the task of founding and renewing churches, guarding the deposit of faith, transmitting the Spirit and sharing His gifts through the ordination of new ministers. Thurian proposes that there be missionary bishops and resident bishops, to fulfill all tasks and to manifest the two different apostolic functions in the Church. Then too, in many churches, the college of presbyters acts as a collective bishop, although the Reformed churches are moving more and more toward a formal episcopacy, always allied to the presbyteral-synodal structure.

There is room, too, for a primacy in the Church. The primatial church is the typical church, to which all others can look for unity; and its bishop is the model bishop, and possibly a pastor of the pastors. The bishop-primate, however, is not (in the view of Protestantism) infallible; for indeed neither the magisterium nor an ecumenical council nor even the Church herself is infallible.

Finally, there is a ministry of deacons in the Church who assist through their service the pastoral and episcopal ministry. The Church must also allow room for charismatic ministries, granted to the Church in all ages to meet the pressing needs of the times. There is not and cannot be, however, any essential conflict between this charismatic ministry and the institutional and ordained ministries in the Church.

The Church ordains its ministers; that is, she recognizes, discerns, and orders these vocations given by God. Ordination, which is a sacrament, administered by the bishop and his college of presbyters, is a prayer, a legitimizing, a dedication, and a begetting; and it confers a permanent consecration on the minister.

Thus through the gift of the Spirit, ministry in the Church serves the Church, nourishes her, and brings her to the final Kingdom of God.

CHAPTER VIII

THE ECUMENICAL DIMENSION

Introduction

The unity of the Church is the central idea in Max Thurian's ecclesiology. There is not a single one of his books nor anyone of his major articles which does not in some way deal with this topic. His personal work, his conversations, his personal and communitarian prayer: all are deeply involved in unity. Even when unity is not the explicit topic, it is always there--as we mentioned in the first chapter--by tone and implication; it forms the substratum, the orientation, the cement of all his work and thought. It is a constant dimension of his theology.

Needless to say, therefore, it is very difficult to isolate and to organize this theme in one well-ordered presentation. There is no way of presenting his ideas on unity just so, according to an outline which originates inevitably from study of his writings. Thus the plan of presentation in this chapter is one decision among many others: a task similar to and even more difficult (and indeed arbitrary), than the presentation of his theology of the Church (Chapter III).

This chapter will present, then, the unity of the Church in its meaning, its visibility, its motives and means, and final unity in pluralism. This will be followed by an analysis of unity and the Word, unity and the Eucharist, and unity and the ministry.[1]

Unity, the Church, and the Churches

The Division of Christians

The Church is the Body of Christ, and this Body cannot be divided. But in the history of the Church in this world, the fact cannot escape us that division has compromised this fundamental unity.[2]

> The soldiers divided among themselves the garments of the Crucified. . . . On the other hand, the group of faithful women at the foot of the cross, and above all the words of the Crucified to his mother and to his disciple, signify the unity of believers in the one Church. Alas, Christians resemble far too often the soldiers who divide among themselves the spoils of Christ, rather than Mary and the Disciple united by the Crucified in one same spiritual and material community.[3]

Divided Christians can certainly give witness to Jesus Christ, but their witness is enfeebled by their division.[4] These divisions should be reduced to their rightful status--that of a sin, a sin of egoism, unworthy of those who have been adopted all together in one baptism to constitute one single Body radiant with the love of Christ.[5] God will give us back our unity only if we repent of our sin, only if we regret our divisions and the causes past and present of our persistence in them.[1]

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[1] It must be emphasized that this chapter will deal with Thurian's theology of unity. This must be distinguished from a criticism and evaluation of his work as a force for unity, from an outside vantage point. The latter is properly the matter for Chapter IX.

[2] VUT, p. 114.

[3] Thurian, "Problèmes," p. 91.

[4] Thurian, "L'unité visible," VC, XVI (1962), p. 154.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 151; LTM, p. 28.

The Meaning of Christian Unity

Unity is at once the gift of God and his will for his Church.[2] Unity is a terrestrial image of the unity of the Triune God; it finds its foundation in the very life of God who is love. As Father, Son, and Spirit are united, so ought all the brothers of Christ be united. And this is possible thanks to the dwelling of Christ in his Body, the Church, through the Holy Spirit. It is because the Spirit has revealed to the Church this perfect unity of the Triune God that Christians are constrained to search out among themselves an organic and visible unity.[3]

Christ cannot be divided. Present among us, he compels us toward unity. He _is_ Truth and Unity, which must not be confounded with our limited concepts of truth and unity.[4] The Church, as mother of the faithful, sustains and provides for the unity of brothers in Christ.[5]

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[1] VUT, p. 21.

[2] Thurian, "Après New Delhi," VC, XVI (1962), p. 1.

[3] Thurian, "Problèmes," p. 91; "Développement du dogme," pp. 154-55; "L'unité visible," VC, XVI (1962), p. 151.

[4] Thurian, "La conférence oecuménique de Lund," p. 134.

[5] Thurian, "Problèmes," p. 91.

Visible and Invisible Unity

Invisible Unity

Because of the essential indivisibility of the Body of Christ, Christians are not now totally divided. There is a unity both visible and invisible.

All Christians are bound by the invisible bonds of the one family of God. We are all brothers, all adopted sons of God in Jesus Christ. We can really say "Our Father," for we are all sons of one Father; no one Christian can really consider another an outsider.[1] This unity is real; the Body of Christ has never been divided.[2] We must recognize Christians separated from us as children of God. "Whatever the shortcomings we may find in their Church life, they believe in Christ as the Savior, they are baptized and incorporated into the Body of Christ, they receive the food of his presence, and, upon his return, they too will enter the Kingdom of God."[3]

Visible Unity

The Church is founded upon one visible and fundamental act: baptism in the name of Christ. "No division of Christians on other points--even very important points--can destroy this fundamental unity of the redeemed, and this visible unity of the baptized."[4] The one baptism incorporates us all into

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[1] VUT, p. 17; LTM, p. 28.

[2] VUT, p. 115; Thurian, "Vers l'unitè," VC, II (1948), p. 75.

[3] VUT, p. 121.

[4] _Ibid_., p. 8. See also LTM, p. 28; Thurian, "L'unité visible," VC, XVI (1962), p. 153.

Christ's own life. Since all Christians are in Christ, Christ is with them in their church.

> But the baptism which Christians have in common is not only a hope that Christ is acting in each Church in the interests of unity; it is already, in its very existence as a universal visible sign, here and now one subsistent form of the visible unity of the Church.[1]

Nothing can arise to endanger this fundamental unity.[2]

Christians are united also in their common adherence to the Bible as embodiment of the living Word of God. "Scripture is a form of visible unity, persisting despite all schisms, and a sign that the Holy Spirit holds the Church together in its essential unity by visible forms. . . ."[3]

Prayer unites all Christians: all share the same Psalms and all children of the family of God can say together "Our Father." The great majority of Christians, in the tradition of their church, adhere to the same fundamental truths expressed in the Apostles' and Nicene creeds.[4]

Thus Christians are visibly one in baptism, in adherence to the same Scriptures, prayers, and fundamental evangelical truths. It is readily and sadly apparent, however, that there is disunity on so much else; the divisions and polarizations remain. In spite of these dissensions in the midst of the family of God, Christians must search for visible unity, must search to re-discover all that deeply unites us.

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[1] VUT, p. 14. See also Thurian, "Walking Together to Christ," p. 143.

[2] VUT, pp. 14-15.

[3] Ibid., p. 10.

[4] Ibid., pp. 17; 22-23; LTM, p. 28.

The Church and Unity: The Problem of Visible and Invisible

One of the knottiest and most complex problems in Thurian's thought is that of the Church visible and invisible vis à vis unity visible and invisible. To summarize (from Chapter III above), the Church invisible is the entire people of God, all men of Christ, not only the baptized.[1] The Church visible is the sign and sacrament of the invisible Church; it is the Body of Christ, the structured institution where the fullness of truth is proclaimed.

Unity is a quality of the Church. It would seem that the invisible Church has only invisible unity: all members of the whole people of God are obviously of the same family, and the unity is of course real. But the Body of Christ is the foundation of invisible unity, and in this term lies the major problem. The visible Church is the Body of Christ. Therefore, all members (known to God alone) of the invisible Church, must belong really to the Body of Christ, which is the visible Church! Further, the Body of Christ cannot be and never has been divided. Yet divisions in the visible Church are simply facts.[2]

From Thurian's writings alone, there is no solution to this contradiction. Certain statements can be made definitely: The invisible Church has only invisible unity. The visible Church has both invisible and visible unity. Visible unity, while in baptism, the Bible, prayers and creeds, is shattered and incomplete: it must be found in the Church of the last age. Invisible unity can never be destroyed. In a sense the Church is one, in a sense divided.

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[1] For a full analysis of the Church visible and invisible, see above, pp. 70-77.

[2] Thurian, "Vers l'unité," p. 75.

But ultimately, no statement can be made about the Body of Christ which does not involve real contradiction, unless one posits an invisible Body of which the visible, and divided, Body is but a sign, which is not what Thurian does.

Motives for Unity

The Christian longs to draw the whole world with him in the following of Christ, and thus the Church must seek unity, for the love of Christ and for love of the world for which Christ died.[1] Indeed, the visible unity we are seeking makes no sense unless we can go forth together to the world to bring it the good news of Christ.[2] The world is waiting for us to reveal our unity. "The future of Christianity is that the world should believe. It will not believe if the church remains divided much longer. The world can believe if love and peace radiate authentically from the refound unity of Christians."[3]

The totality of the gifts of the Spirit are found only in the totality of believers. "Our great stimulant in the work and prayer for unity is that with that state found again, the Church will be able to realize a fullness of life and a fullness of truth and love unrealizable today by any one of the fragments of Christianity."[1]

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[1] VUT, p. 18.

[2] Glynn, "Ecumenism and the Council," p. 176.

[3] OB, p. 159; MMC, p. 7.

Pressure for unity is great, too, among young people. Sometimes they say, "We have enough as a common faith." Life can press us to unity; the theology of unity may well be preceded by the fact.[2]

The most compelling motive for the search for unity is the will of Jesus Christ. The churches must realize that Christ wills and compels us toward unity. The Christian, in accordance with Christ's own prayer, longs for the time when all will find visible unity in a single church.[3]

> Thus, totally surrendering ourselves and all that we are and all our ecclesiological conceptions and all our dogmatic certainties to the will of Jesus Christ praying to his Father for unity, we shall be intimately united with that whole cloud of witnesses of every time and of every place who, grouped at this instant around the throne of God, utter the true prayer for unity, the exact words and final intentions of which must remain unknown to us here.[4]

The Means of Unity

Impelled by Christ and love for the world, we must seek every means to realize visible unity among all Christians.

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[1] Thurian, "Développement du dogme," p. 157. Thurian here acknowledges his debt to Moehler.

[2] Interview with Max Thurian, at Taizé, December 28, 1966.

[3] Thurian, "La conférence oecuménique de Lund," p. 134; LTM, p. 131. See also Thurian _et al._, "Le dialogue avec les non-chrétiens," VC, XXI, No. 83 (1967), p. 67.

[4] VUT, p. 134.

In communion with the whole Church--in space and time, visible and invisible--the Christian prays for unity, so that this unity, already given and real, may be manifested concretely and may be a living unity. The Christian cannot know what potentialities the Body of Christ possesses. So, "in his prayer for unity, he submits to the Holy Spirit, recognizing his own human weakness, the poverty of his imagination, and his incapacity to comprehend God's plans."[1]

Unity can be sought also through the preaching of the Gospel and peaceful witness to truth.[2] Ecumenical theologians, too, are necessary;

> but in addition to, and in co-ordination with, these there must be in every faith a spiritual ministry, for the need is to translate into concrete Christian life the mere utterances of theologians engaged in ecumenical studies and research, and--more important still--to translate into concrete life the unity already present in the mystery of Christ.[3]

A decisive beginning in the work of reunion is the mutual asking of pardon. "When brothers of the same family, though tragically separated by history, can ask of one another pardon and mercy, they already begin to be reunited."[4] In this mutual confession of sins, the recognition of responsibility in the divisions of Christianity, there must be entailed a real change in the lives of all Christians.[1]

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[1] _Ibid_., p. 117. See also _ibid_., pp. 115-20 and 134; Thurian, "La conférence oecuménique de Lund," pp. 134-35; "Après New Delhi," p. 1.

[2] LTM, p. 132.

[3] Biot, _Protestant Monasticism_, p. 120.

[4] "Vatican II and Ecumenical Dialogue," p. 27.

Mutual repentance and pardon cannot come from proud isolation. Christians must be in constant dialogue, of course; but they must do more: they must learn to live together. More and more, Christians have to live together, to be together in work, in prayer, and in many aspects of their lives. Visible and full unity will come from the life of Christians.[2]

The churches must also devote their efforts to renewal and revivification. They must learn to accept forms and practices not in their own traditions.[3] Through renewal, the churches must continually sift what is essential from what is peripheral and accidental; they must ever advance through conversion to Christ, sanctification of the Spirit, and obedience to the Father of all.[4] "It is only by means of this reformation of the whole of Christianity that we will find the road to the visible unity of Christians in a single Church."[5]

In the search and work for unity, two complementary qualities are necessary: a firm dedication and loyalty to one's own ecclesial community, and a great ecumenical openness and thrust. The Christian must not relativize or minimize the faith of his own church; on the other hand, he cannot be too sectarian or partisan, despising those who do not believe or worship exactly as he does. While loyal to his own tradition, he must have a faith that overcomes prejudices, that is open to new possibilities in the Church's life, that is combined with a profound understanding of the point of view of other Christians. This does not involve disavowal or ambiguity, but the spirit of peace which pleads the unity of the faith where other men can only see opposition or indifference.[1]

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[1] VUT, p. 113.

[2] Interview with Max Thurian, at Taizé, December 28, 1966. See also VUT, p. 48; Thurian, "Un acte oecuménique," p. 6; "Dialogue avec non-chrétiens," pp. 66-67.

[3] Thurian, "La conférence oecuménique de Lund," p. 135.

[4] VUT, p. 7.

[5] Thurian, "Walking Together to Christ," p. 133.

> What is required in the search for visible unity is a great doctrinal clear-sightedness and a no less great ecumenical ardor. It is important to have that pastoral concern which seeks to maintain in the faith and in Christian truth those committed to our care, and at the same time that pastoral concern which consists in exposing them to the dimensions of charity and unity. In effect, it is only in the full awareness of the essential verities of the faith that Christians can go forward in the hope of some day arriving at visible unity in one and the same Church; and conversely it is only in great ecumenical openness, in a genuine thirst for charity and unity, that they can remain firm and vital in the faith.[2]

The ecumenical effort is not solely directed toward reunification of ecclesial institutions; it is also directed toward the reconciliation of all separated and alienated men, and toward the sanctification of all the members of the Body of Christ.[1] It is the task of all Christians, as it is the vocation of the brothers of Taizé, to be witnesses, in a torn and individualistic world, to a mutual Christian and human unity which overcomes all barriers.[2]

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[1] LTM, p. 131; CFS, p. 132; Thurian, "La conférence oecuménique de Lund," p. 134. See also Heijke, Ecumenical Light, p. 131.

On openness, Thurian comments: ". . . in invoking the Holy Spirit upon the ecumenical movement in Catholicism, [our prayer] may ask that the Roman Church may become more and more truly Catholic, opening itself to all the ecclesiastical riches of this great globe." (VUT, p. 128).

[2] LTM, pp. vii-viii.

A Theology of Dépassement

The unity intended by Christ is not primarily a gift already made, or a static uniformity, but a dynamic communion to be realized. The movement towards unity does not go back; it is not a "return"; rather, it goes forward to the future.[3] Thus unity is not fixed, but a living unity which is daily enriched, daily brought further, daily enlarged toward the final unity of the Kingdom of God.[4] Life is as important as theology; it is necessary to make unity at the same time as one thinks about it.[5]

Thurian's emphasis on the dynamism of unity and of the movement for unity leads him to a theological view which is essentially synthesis by means of a "going-beyond" (dépassement).[6]

> Our modern ecumenism must be a mutual, spiritual and theological help to evangelize the modern world that God loves. This is perhaps the way in which we will progress into the last stage of visible unity for Christians, no longer looking at each other with love or suspicion, but looking together at the world for which Christ died and

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[1] OB, p. 151; Frère Charles Eugène, "Taizé and Orthodoxy," Diakonia, II, No. 2 (1967), p. 168.

[2] Heijke, Ecumenical Light, p. 99.

[3] Ibid., pp. 121, 141. [4] VUT, p. 115. [5] OB, p. 156.

[6] Paupert notes this method, in Taizé et l'église, p. 218.

> for which we, together, are called to sacrifice our ecclesial and confessional comfort, united so that the world may believe.[1]

Thurian takes note of this same approach in the theology of the Second Vatican Council. The hardened, exclusive positions of both Catholics and Protestants in the past have been surpassed: the exclusive have become inclusive. Among other examples, he cites "the unique sacrifice of the cross" as the exclusive and defensive method of the Reform, "the sacrifice of the cross and the sacrifice of the Mass" as the method of juxtaposition and anti-Protestantism of post-Tridentine theology, and, as the method of ecumenical "going-beyond," "the sacrifice of the cross together with the Mass, sacramentalized, made present in the sacrificial memorial of the eucharist."[2]

This theology of "dépassement" is characteristic of Thurian; it is the natural source and result of his total dedication to unity, his supremely irenic and open theological mind, and his identification with the dynamic.

Unanimity in Pluralism

We have seen that the Triune God is our model for unity. But we must take note that although the Three act in perfect harmony, yet they are personally distinctly themselves. Christians must become one before the world, and for the world, and they should manifest visibly this unity.[1] But this unity does not imply a uniformity of structures nor a uniformity of organization or of government. Rather, there must be a living variety, an organic bond among all the regional churches in their valid diversity, the token that the Holy Spirit quickens and enriches the Church in unity.[2] "Isn't this the unity which the church of the first centuries knew: a fundamental unity in biblical faith, baptism and the Eucharist amid a great local diversity in the manifestations of the church and even of the ministry?"[3]

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[1] OB, p. 110.

[2] RPV, p. 71. Other examples concern salvation by faith and works, the pope and collegiality, the Church, and Scripture and tradition.

The Roman Catholic Church has generally pursued a course toward an absolute unity in centralization and uniformity. Only after the Second Vatican Council and the accompanying theological, biblical, liturgical, and ecumenical movements is this changing. Protestantism, on the other hand, has always laid much greater stress on the unity of the local Church than on institutional unity guaranteed by a magisterium.[4] And Thurian, from within the Reformed Tradition, looks forward to the day when the Church will be one in faith and diverse in the expressions of that faith.[1] ". . . these churches must find their unity in faith, in sacraments and in discipline: a unity which is not uniformity, but unanimity in pluralism of existences and manifestations."[2]

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[1] VUT, p. 3.

[2] Thurian, "L'unité visible," VC, XVI (1962), p. 153; LTM, p. 65.

[3] OB, pp. 154-55. See also VUT, p. 47. The principle applies also to the liturgy, which "can create an ecumenical unity of churches everywhere, in the diversity of rites which manifest the integration of fundamental structures into diverse cultures." (Thurian, "Liturgie et actualité," p. 22).

[4] Roux, "Dialogue with Catholicism," p. 430; Thurian, "Le dogme de l'assomption," p. 10; Thurian, "Le Saint-Siège et le mouvement oecuménique," VC, VI (1952), p. 165.

Further, these churches, of one heart but in a pluralism of existences, are not divided but enriched by what each one contributes.[3] Christ speaks to each Christian equally through his own ecclesial communion and the churches of his brothers.

> Let us be very much on our guard not to shut ourselves off from that Word which God wills--especially nowadays--to have us hear through all our Christian brothers, from wherever they may come. . . . If we have been founded on the truth which is in Jesus Christ, we ought to fear nothing, we should not be afraid of any contact; rather, we should rejoice to be enriched by the witness of all our Christian brothers in all churches.[4]

Final Unity

Ecumenism, ultimately, is only a preliminary stage in the mission of Christians among men. The churches strive forward toward final unity, the unity of the Kingdom. The Church-to-come will surpass all the miseries and all the deficiencies of theology and present life; it will be the visible *una sancta*.[5] The precise form of this unity is a secret of

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[1] Thurian, "La conférence oecuménique de Lund," p. 129.

[2] Interview with Max Thurian, at Taizé, December 28, 1966.

[3] VUT, p. 85; Thurian, "Après New Delhi," p. 4.

[4] Thurian, "Après New Delhi," pp. 2-3.

[5] Frère Charles Eugène, "Taizé and Orthodoxy," p. 168; Thurian, "Vers l'unité," p. 75; VUT, p. 115.

God's will, but it will surely not be the victory of one church over another, but rather the fruit of brotherly dialogue in liberty and the light of the Gospel of Christ: a fullness of life, truth, and love.[1]

The picture of final unity was well presented by a key statement of the World Council of Churches at New Delhi in 1962. Thurian accepts this as his own summary:

> We believe that unity is at once the gift of God and his will for his Church; that unity is made manifest when all those who, in one place, are baptized in Jesus Christ and, confessing him as Lord and Savior, are led by the Holy Spirit to a total community, confessing the same apostolic faith, preaching the same Gospel, sharing in the same bread, uniting in common prayer, with a view to a communitarian life which shines forth in witness and in service to all, and, at the same time, find themselves in communion with the entirety of the Christian community, in all places and in all times, so that their ministry and the quality of their members are recognized by all, and all are able to work and speak together, according to the circumstances, in order that the tasks to which God has called his people might be accomplished. We believe that we must pray and work for such a unity.[2]

The Ecumenical Movement

This deep desire for unity is but one aspect of the general re-awakening that has been going on in the Protestant churches since the beginning of the century. This revival, in fact, extends to every sector of Christian life. "It includes a theological and biblical revival, a liturgical revival, a missionary revival, and a revival above all of a study of the Church as such, accompanied by the birth and development of the ecumenical movement."[1] The revival has not been one-sided or exclusive. Protestantism has become keenly aware of the spiritual, liturgical, and biblical renewal within the Roman Catholic communion.[2]

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[1] VUT, p. 19; Thurian, "La théologie catholique après Vatican II," VC, XX, No. 80 (1966), p. 71; Thurian, "Développement du dogme," p. 157.

[2] quoted by Thurian in "Après New Delhi," p. 1, and VUT, p. 150. See also, in Thurian's own words, OB, pp. 156-57.

But the most striking example of the change of current from the nineteenth century, both on the Protestant and the Catholic sides, remains the change in attitude towards the unity of the Church: "The New Testament texts on the Church and on its unity are being understood in a wholly new way--to the extent in fact that the concrete attitude of the Protestant faiths in this regard has undergone a fundamental change."[3] This is a vastly important trend in contemporary Protestantism.[4] Max Thurian and his work are a result of and also a forming influence on this trend.

And the Roman Catholic Church, too, seems prepared and indeed eager to run the risks of universality. This Church, no longer a fortress, is going forth to an encounter with non-Catholic Christians and with all men.[5] Now, surely, it will be impossible for the Roman Church to grow in another direction.[1] So the Protestant and Catholic churches must strive to meet each other, and having met, to go forth together to the world to bring to it the message of Christ.

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[1] Biot, Protestant Monasticism, p. 109. Thurian can say: "Our century is truly a century of the Church for Protestantism." ("Spiritualité protestante," p. 375).

[2] Roux, "Dialogue with Catholicism," p. 429.

[3] Biot, Protestant Monasticism, p. 109.

[4] A. Raymond George, Review of Confession, by Max Thurian, in Scottish Journal of Theology, XIII (June, 1960), p. 213.

[5] Glynn, "Ecumenism and the Council," p. 176.

Unity, the Word, and Catholic Truth

The rediscovery and recovery of visible unity among the churches requires a common acceptance of conciliar faith and a truly ecumenical reading of the Scriptures: a unity based on the Word of God and on truth.

Thurian proposes that the Sacred Scripture cannot be totally and truly comprehended except in the universal communion of all the churches, assisted by the Holy Spirit, and with intention of faithfully transmitting this one Gospel to men of the present day.[2]

> The Bible ought to be read freely by each one, and the individual, enlightened by the Holy Spirit, can receive light therein. However, he is able to hold firm assurance concerning the Christian truth only in a communitarian study of the Bible; that is to say, that the truth can be discovered by the individual only in the Church's reading of the Scriptures, or more exactly, in the Scripture as read and explained by the Church, the total and ecumenical community of believers of all places and of all times.[3]

The cause of unity in the Bible has been greatly served by the Second Vatican Council, which has caused to grow again in the Catholic Church a love for the Word of God, an eternal source of spiritual and ecumenical life.[4] All--Protestants and Catholics--must learn to read the Bible with the eyes of others; all must eliminate intransigeant purism.[1] Our shared search for better communication of the Gospel to men is truly an unexpected form of living tradition in our day: "Is it not the case that our understanding of the Gospel deepens and progresses where our ecumenical awareness is the more lively?"[2]

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[1] Interview with Max Thurian, at Taizé, December 28, 1966.

[2] VUT, p. 107.

[3] Thurian, "Spiritualité protestante," p. 376.

[4] RPV, p. 79.

But total unity must be a unity also in essential faith, a faith born of conciliar doctrine and theological truth. The Reformers, as well as the Catholic and Orthodox churches, accepted the first four councils and the basic creeds or symbols of faith. The Reformed churches today must recover this source of unity. Thurian looks forward to a truly ecumenical council of the future in which all Christians, at least potentially, participate.[3]

The World Council of Churches, also, performs an ecumenical task: it constitutes a ministry of catholicity. In churches with an episcopate, this ministry is exercised by bishops, who keep their local churches united in themselves and in communion with other local churches throughout the world.[4]

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[1] Thurian, "La conférence oecuménique de Lund," pp. 134-35. Thurian suggests a mutual exchange of professors, which is indeed becoming daily more common.

[2] Thurian, "Renewal and the Scripture-Tradition Problem in the Light of Vatican II and Montreal 1963," in _Renewal of Religious Thought_, Vol. I of _Theology of Renewal_ [Proceedings of the Congress on the Theology of the Renewal of the Church, Centenary of Canada, 1867-1967], ed. by L. K. Shook (New York: Herder and Herder, 1968), p. 82.

[3] Cf. VUT, pp. 27, 29; see above, p. 133.

[4] VUT, p. 24.

"The World Council, without being an ordinary institution of the Church, has caused the reappearance of a sign of the Church's visible unity: the ministry of catholicity, episcopal or non-episcopal."[1]

The Second Vatican Council, also, as Thurian says many times, has stimulated movement toward the visible unity of Christians, especially with its "masterpieces": the texts on revelation and on the church in the modern world.[2]

The Church is the privileged milieu of truth. In this universal community of the Church, each Christian has his share in the deepening of doctrinal knowledge and the preservation of the deposit of truth.[3] This Christian truth is catholic

> because it represents the unity of faith of all Christians of all times and of everywhere, but also because it corresponds to the whole being of the Church, the Body of Christ, because it takes man in his whole being in order to transform him into a new creation.[4]

But to re-find their visible unity, Christians must realize that they do not possess the truth, but rather that they are possessed by it.[5]

Theology too can and must be a source of unity:

> Theology, the wisdom of God himself, seeks to address itself to all men as it does to each of the baptized. It seeks to be obedient to the Word of God and attentive to contemporary man. How could such a theology, on its part, not prepare, little by little, the visible unity of all

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[1] *Ibid*., p. 25. [2] RPV, p. 9; cf. above, p. 131.

[3] LTM, pp. 9, 11.

[4] Thurian, "Le concile de Chalcédoine," p. 53.

[5] Thurian, "Walking Together to Christ," p. 135.

> Christians, a unity which will not be the victory of one over the other, but the fruit of a brotherly dialogue in liberty and in the light of the one Gospel of Christ.[1]

The Doctrine of the Blessed Virgin Mary

One of the most obvious sources of disunity, in the context of conciliar faith, theology and a common understanding of the Scriptures, is disagreement on the role and privileges of Mary. Not only obvious, it is indeed tragic, since Mary should be a cause of rejoicing and prayer rather than division.[2]

The Marian doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church, above all those arising in relatively modern times, must be tempered, according to Thurian, and made conformable to the New Testament.[3] He himself presents a biblical and ecumenical study of Mary which avoids every form of polemic, and which shows how closely united the churches really are.[4] Rapport in mariological thought is evidently vitally important, for to speak of Mary is to speak of the Church. The work of Thurian combined with the work of modern Catholic mariologists forms a fine groundwork for a theology of _dépassement_ in this area.

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[1] Thurian, "La théologie catholique," p. 71.

[2] MMC, p. 7.

[3] VUT, pp. 130, 133.

[4] See, above all, MMC; also: "Le dogme de l'assomption"; "Problèmes posés aux Protestants par la mariologie"; "Mariology (Reformed)"; and "Marie dans la Bible et dans l'Eglise," in Dialogue sur la Vierge, ed. by Maréchale Booth et al. (Paris: E. Vitte, 1950), pp. 107-30.

We may also include many references to Mary and mariological doctrine in his other books and articles. Aside from the dogmas of the Immaculate Conception and the Assumption and a problem concerning Mary's role now as type of the Church, we may say that Thurian's mariology is not only in complete agreement with the Roman Catholic doctrine, but in its turn enlightening and contributory. See also above, pp. 84-93.

Unity, Worship, and the Eucharist

The liturgical movement of this century has focused attention on the ecumenical character of worship. The worship and liturgy of the Church ought to unite us to the Church of all times and of all places. This does not imply a sterile uniformity of worship; rather, liturgy can create a union of churches in a diversity of rites, a unanimity in pluralism, which manifests both fundamental agreement and fundamental structures, and a diversity of cultures and needs.[1]

The Eucharist, of course, is the sacrament of unity par excellence; it is the sacrament which both creates and signifies unity, at once the source and the crown of all unity. In the Eucharist, men subject to the forces of separation and breaking-up are given the supernatural means of living the vocation of unity.[2]

The primal unity caused by the Eucharist is the union of each individual Christian with God himself:

> The gift of union with the Father and the Son is the special gift of the Eucharist, the gift of Christ's Body which nourishes Christ's ecclesial Body. This gift of union with God is bound up with the unity of the Father and the Son in the Incarnation and sacrifice, and the fruit of this union is the evangelization of the world.[3]

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[1] Thurian, "Liturgie et actualité," p. 22.

[2] InET, pp. 21, 23; RPV, p. 8.

[3] OB, p. 23.

Although each believer is a separate man, gathered around the Lord's Table we form one body because we all share in one bread. "Thus we affirm that by our communion in the Body and Blood of Christ the Church is gathered together and built up in unity."[1]

The Eucharist is the best prayer for unity. When we are gathered together by Christ's Body, then we can ask the Lord to make real and visible the unity of all Christians.[2] And this Eucharist will give the real power and the motive which engage all Christians in the search and process of union.[3] A truly ecumenical--that is to say, really Christian--"celebration of the Sacrament of unity and communion sooner or later is bound to dislodge the unchristian lethargy which considers dividedness and separation the normal state of affairs."[4]

A Sign of Contradiction

The Eucharist is sign and sacrament of unity, of a unity which really exists among us, all sharers in the Body of Christ by baptism and faith.[5] Communion in the crucified and risen Lord is a sign of unity and of charity which pledges each Christian to visible unity and to active charity.[1] The Eucharist is truly the sacrament of community.[2]

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[1] InET, p. 21.

[2] _Ibid_.; VUT, p. 135.

[3] RPV, p. 8; Thurian, "Intercommunion," VC, XVII (1963), p. 203.

[4] Heijke, _Ecumenical Light_, p. 181.

[5] Thurian, "A propos de 'l'avertissement' du Saint-Office, du 5 juin, 1948," VC, II (1948), p. 188. See also Thurian, "Intercommunion," VC, XVII (1963), p. 203; InET, p. 21.

In The Eucharistic Memorial, Thurian gives a succinct yet very rich summary of the Eucharist as sign of unity:

> If the Church makes the Eucharist, the Eucharist makes the Church. The Eucharist unifies and joins together the members of the Body of Christ; those who have been baptized are joined together in unity and can but seek the deepening, extension and fulfillment of their unity. As the sacrament of unity, the Eucharist is the sacrament of charity which it supports and extends. . . . And in the life of the local community, the Eucharist is the place where the Church is built up and deepened in charity. That Church which celebrates the Eucharist frequently beholds Christ, through the Eucharist, developing His charity, His unity, and making His word and His life effective in the world.[3]

Ironically, the Eucharist is also the manifest sign of disunity, for today all Christians may not share in the same Supper of the Lord. Nevertheless, or indeed because of this, we must communicate as frequently as possible, making this communion the sign of our deep sorrow for the division of Christians.[4]

It is profoundly significant that the Eucharist, the most excellent sign of unity in the Church, is the only function of all those in the church at Taizé that is celebrated separately by Catholics and Protestants.

> Nor can it be otherwise. Until true and final unity is attained, the liturgical separation will persist as the significant and painful reminder of the estrangement. On

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[1] Thurian, "Intercommunion," VC, XVII (1963), p. 211.

[2] Boere, "Eucharist and Lord's Supper," p. 93.

[3] EM, II, 124.

[4] Thurian, "Après New Delhi," p. 5.

> this crucial point there is clear thinking. Taizé would have it no other way; the ecumenical movement, to produce real and lasting effects, demands both charity and clarity.[1]

Intercommunion

Yet the Eucharist impels us, pledges us to visible unity. As a sign of division it must be provisional. Full intercommunion must one day come about. Intercommunion is a problem which is current, knotty, and urgent. Thurian handles both its theory and practical aspects. He not only presents its theological ground, but also sees its problems, and attempts to reach realistic solutions.

Is intercommunion the means for or the result of unity? There is much to be said for each on the basis of Eucharistic and ecumenical theology and of pastoral concern. Today, more and more, Christians cannot accept the division at the Holy Table; they practice active intercommunion. But the theologian knows also that we cannot have unity in confusion and lack of faith. Certainly, intercommunion is a means to unity, but not solely a means. It is also, most importantly, a result.[2]

> Sacramental intercommunion will constitute the final realization of visible unity. In fact, when the Churches are able to exchange ministers and to participate together in the same Eucharist, then problems of organization, liturgical differences, various non-theological differen-

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[1] McElrath, "Ecumenical Experiment at Taizé," p. 25. Thurian states very strongly that unity in the Eucharist is the principal work of Taizé: around the altar, with faith in the Real Presence, offering the praise and suffering of the Church and waiting for the coming of the Lord and of his Kingdom. (Interview with Max Thurian, at Taizé, December 28, 1966). See also above, pp. 33-37.

[2] Interview with Max Thurian, at Taizé, December 28, 1966.

> tiating factors--these will no longer constitute any real division.[1]

It must not be forgotten, of course, that intercommunion can also be a potent means for total and visible unity, a means of recognizing and living the fact that Christ establishes the unity of his Body in the communion of his Eucharistic Body.[2]

> The intention of reserving full intercommunion for the day when the Churches reach perfect unity and recognize one another fully as the Church of Christ loses sight of the fact that the Churches, including the Catholic Church, are "on the way," are "pilgrim Churches," characterized in every respect by "provisionality."[3]

Again, with his usual effort to soften the older polarized position, Thurian sums up:

> For certain Christians, the Eucharistic communion transcends our divisions. The Lord's Supper is the means of grace to obtain pardon and victory over sin. This concerns also the sin of division. For these Christians it is incomprehensible that the division of the churches forbids a common participation in the Lord's Supper where Christ offers us pardon and victory. For other Christians the life of the Church, which is an incorporation into the Body of Christ, implies an organic unity of faith, of life, and of love. That unity is rendered visible in the ministry and in the sacraments, which are inseparable. It is incomprehensible for these Christians that those who do not participate in the same organic life in the same church be able to partake together in the Eucharistic communion. There is an incompatibility between these two positions, and it is necessary to recognize honestly that there we have not the unity that God demands of us.[4]

Intercommunion and the Churches

The diverse ecclesial traditions have differing opinions on the degree of unity and agreement necessary for intercommunion. Thurian attempts to categorize, generally speaking, these views and then offers his own criticism, suggestions and conclusions for action. He distinguishes four conceptions: the total, ministerial, doctrinal, and open views.[1]

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[1] VUT, p. 45. [2] EM, II, 124.

[3] Heijke, Ecumenical Light, p. 186.

[4] Thurian, "L'unité visible," VC, XVI (1962), p. 156.

The total concept is the view characteristically held by the Orthodox and Roman Catholic Churches.[2] This view holds that there is only one single Church of Christ, containing fullness of truth, and a ministry guaranteed by an historical episcopacy. Communion in this church must therefore be closed to Christians who do not belong; intercommunion cannot, properly speaking, exist in a church which is one and indivisible.

Although theologically coherent in itself, there are questions in practice about the total concept: Do the faithful always and everywhere believe the same fullness of truth? Should communion be closed to those who do not belong but whose faith is nevertheless the same as those who do? This concept seems to make the Eucharist not at all the cause, but strictly the result of unity.[3]

The Anglican tradition espouses the ministerial concept. The basis of intercommunion is the unity of the ordained ministry, based on the historical succession of bishops. Doctrine and faith are relative compared to the importance of ministry. Thus a limited intercommunion is possible in three ways: intercelebration with ministers of another but equally valid episcopal tradition; the reception of communion by any baptized Christian from the valid and recognized ministers of the episcopal tradition; reception of communion by their own communicants from other ministers if their conscience allows it.

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[1] All of the following information may be found in Thurian, "Intercommunion," VC, XVII (1963), pp. 201-08 and (identically) in OB, pp. 89-100.

[2] "We will give ecclesiastical titles to these four concepts, not because the churches who bear these titles hold these described points of view totally or integrally, but because traditionally they are the principal representatives of these points of view." (OB, p. 90).

[3] VUT, p. 46.

But could not other churches, without this historical continuity, have a valid and blessed ministry in the power of the Holy Spirit? Would not a minister who fully believes be preferable to one who does not believe, even in the Real Presence, although ordained by a bishop?[1] Then too, there are surely non-theological elements present in this jealous guarding of historical continuity in churches whose very continuity has often been attacked. (To be sure, there are non-theological factors present in _all_ of these views of intercommunion).

An interesting combination of the total and ministerial concepts leads to this conjecture by Thurian:

> It is possible to imagine that the Catholic Church will one day give access to its Eucharist to all Christians who believe in the real presence. This is purely an hypothesis, but one which does not contradict Catholic doctrine on the priesthood. However, the opposite seems impossible. How can the Catholic Church authorize its

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[1] This latter objection is found only in "Intercommunion," p. 206, and not in the later OB.

> faithful to receive communion from Protestant pastors, the validity of whose ministry it does not recognize?[1]

The doctrinal concept is common to the Lutheran communion. The condition for intercommunion is unity of faith in the real presence of Christ's body and blood. Thus intercommunion will be possible among all churches as soon as they reach a doctrinal consensus on the Eucharist.

There could be an illusion here. Are the churches who require the same faith and unity in doctrine as a condition for intercommunion sure of the faith of their own faithful? Also, there are surely non-theological factors operating here as elsewhere.

The Reformed churches hold an open concept of intercommunion. This concept is supremely Christocentric. Christ alone is master and host at the Supper; no one can stop a baptized person who believes in Jesus Christ from receiving communion, for Christ invites all.[2]

One must beware, in open communion, that the Eucharist itself is not emptied of all content and become purely symbolic. Further, open intercommunion is possible only if faith in the real presence and ministerial and liturgical discipline are considered with new seriousness. Frequently, the "open" churches have posed serious obstacles to unity and intercommunion by a lack of attention to these matters, by a lack of ecumenical respect for sister churches.[1]

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[1] OB, p. 42.

[2] Thurian himself holds this open view, with the reservations expressed in his brief critique and with the practice of Taizé (previously explained: see above, pp. 259-61.

"We would not see any major difficulty in a Catholic partaking of the Reformed Eucharist, because the unity signified by the sacrament really exists, the unity of our insertion into the Body of Christ by baptism and faith." (Thurian, "A propos du Saint-Office," p. 188).

A cogent reflection is:

> How can intercommunion be practiced between two distinct churches over a considerable period of time without anything changing between these churches with regard to their unity? How can we receive communion together with a firm knowledge that afterwards we will remain separated from an ecclesiastical point of view? Today, fortunately, the attention of the churches is being drawn to this anomaly.[2]

It is impossible to say that one concept or another is the more correct. More study is needed; the truth may be found somewhere in all viewpoints.[3] If there is not yet Eucharistic intercommunion among Christians, there is certainly a real intercommunion of misery and weakness: we are all one before Christ who challenges us about our common sin of disunity.[4] But we are all also searching and striving for a real intercommunion in his body and blood.

The visible unity of all Christians in the Church of Christ will be realized only when all Christians can communicate together at the same Eucharist.[5] By the same token, this intercommunion cannot take place at all unless all Christians commit themselves to seek visible unity and to live in effective charity. Every possible action must be taken to end division in every domain of ecclesial life.[1]

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[1] Thurian refers specifically here to allowing celebration by a layman, the ordination of women, etc. ("Intercommunion," VC, XVII [1963], p. 208).

[2] OB, p. 96. [3] VUT, p. 47. [4] OB, p. 123.

[5] InET, p. 23; Thurian, "Joie au ciel, exulte la terre," p. 36.

A Note on Intercelebration

Lastly, inter-celebration might be mentioned. This, the practice of common celebration by pastors of different faiths and churches and reception of communion by the faithful present from their own pastor, has been practiced experimentally and is gaining favor. Even Roman Catholics (unofficially) have shared in intercelebrations. Thurian speaks well of this effort:

> There is in intercelebration an act of confidence in the other and in the work of the Spirit in him and in his church, a work of the Spirit which is not able to exist without a certain bond with the historical institution of Christ. . . . There is in intercelebration a gesture of abandonment to the Lord of the Church who alone is able to make the divided members of his Body into a single and visible Church.[2]

Unity and the Ministry

Unity, God's gift and his will for his Church, cannot be visibly manifest until the ministry of the Church is recognized by all.[3] The fundamental unity which we already possess must be given form by a common ministry.[4]

Our prayer for unity at this point should become ur-

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[1] OB, pp. 99-100. There is one doctrine on which Thurian is quite unequivocal: "Faith in the real and living presence of Christ in the Eucharist is essential to the visible unity of Christians." (InET, p. 23; "Joie au ciel, exulte la terre," p. 36).

[2] Thurian, "Intercommunion," VC, XVII (1963), p. 212. Thurian's term is concélébration, but in order not to confuse this practice with the Roman Catholic and Eastern practice of concelebration, I have chosen this better term as used by DuBois in his translation of Le pain unique (OB).

[3] VUT, p. 150.

[4] *Ibid.*, pp. 14-15.

> gent that the Churches may discover, through a searching consideration of theology and history, the possibility of expressing the unity of all the ministrations carried on in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and that they inquire also into the possibility of reuniting all ministries in a sacramental communion required by the visible Church.[1]

Ministry is at the service of unity in truth and charity.[2] It bears fruit in unity.[3] And not only is ministry in the Church, considered as a whole, at the service of unity, but there must be a ministry of unity within the Church; this ministry is essential for maintaining truth in the Church. It has already been noted that the bishops, ideally, fulfill this role in episcopal churches, and that the World Council of Churches fulfills this ministry, at least provisionally, for the churches of non-episcopal structures as well as episcopal churches.[4]

Each individual minister, whether deacon, pastor, or bishop, is really ordained for the one universal Church. Even if this ministry is not now able to be accepted everywhere, nevertheless the ordaining church does not ordain for itself alone, but for the service of the entire Body of Christ.[5] Obviously, a universal ministry is not now accepted by all ecclesial bodies. There are serious problems. The Roman

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[1] *Ibid.*, p. 129.

[2] Thurian, "L'ordination des pasteurs," p. 211.

[3] Thurian, "L'organisation du ministère," p. 36.

[4] VUT, pp. 24, 105; also Thurian, "Unity of the Ministry," p. 297. See above, p. 220.

[5] Thurian, "L'ordination des pasteurs," p. 211.

Catholic, Orthodox, and Anglican traditions, for example, believe in one total unified ministry for their church, a result of episcopal ordination and historical apostolic succession. These churches cannot be blamed for their convictions. In this viewpoint is contained an aspect of the structure of the Church often neglected by the churches of the Reform. In Thurian's words, "We cannot reproach them for it, given that they believe--and herein lies a connection between them and Protestants--that this episcopal structure was contained already in the organization of the Church described by the New Testament."[1]

There are also evidently many non-theological factors which militate against a truly unified and accepted ministry. The churches must now be ready to rid themselves of these factors in order to rediscover a common doctrine and practice of ministry in the light of the Word of God. Indeed, the vast social changes of our day have forced the churches to re-think the structure of their ministries.[2]

Thurian has very few practical suggestions regarding unity of the ministry. He does of course advocate prayer and dialogue:

> Therefore, dialogue and negotiations concerning the visible unity of the churches implies a deeper inquiry into the apostolic doctrine of the ministry and a mutual reconciliation regarding ordination and apostolic succession. This requires from either side great lucidity in seeing what is essential and what is accidental to the ministry, what belongs to faith and what is the fruit of history, what are theological factors and what are non-theological factors. This also implies a spirit of sacri-

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[1] VUT, p. 132.

[2] OB, p. 46.

> fice concerning one's own tradition and confidence in God whose Spirit breathes where he wishes when he distributes his charisms.[1]

He does make one interesting proposal: that while we await full reconciliation, at the ordination of ministers of one church, the ministers of another church be invited to share in the laying-on of hands. This would signify concretely the seriousness of our committment to final unity.[2]

Summary

The unity of the Church is a constant dimension of the writings and work of Max Thurian. Today, division has compromised the fundamental unity of the Body of Christ. But Christ, present among us, compels all Christians to repent of their sin of division and to seek an organic and living unity among themselves, a unity based ultimately upon the unity of the Triune God.

We do not live in total separation; there is already a real unity. Invisibly, all Christians are of the one family of God; all are adopted sons of God and brothers of Jesus Christ, and all are redeemed by him. One baptism and one Bible are visible signs of the unity we have now. However, our visible unity is shattered and incomplete; it must be found in the Church of the last age.

The world is waiting for us to reveal our unity. It will not believe if the Church is divided for a yet longer time. Therefore, Christians must earnestly seek unity, for love of Christ, in obedience to his manifest will that we be one, and for love of the world for which he died.

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[1] _Ibid_., pp. 87-88.

[2] _Ibid_., p. 88.

Decisive steps in the search for union are prayer, renewal--both ecclesial and personal--and the mutual asking for pardon. The work for unity requires both firm dedication to one's own ecclesial tradition and also a deep pastoral concern and ecumenical ardor.

Unity is not fixed or static, but a living, dynamic communion-to-be-realized. Nor does unity imply a uniformity of structures or of organization; rather it requires a fundamental unity of biblical faith, of baptism and of the Eucharist in a great local diversity of manifestations and expressions of this faith. So the churches must strive forward toward final unity, the unity of the Kingdom of God, the fruit of brotherly dialogue in liberty and the light of the Gospel of Christ.

The rediscovery of visible union among the churches requires, further, a truly ecumenical reading of the Scriptures, for the Scriptures cannot be totally and truly comprehended except in the universal communion of all the churches. The churches must also find agreement in fundamental faith, that is, in conciliar faith; and the theological thought that flourishes in the Church can be a potent force for unity.

The Holy Eucharist is the sacrament of unity par excellence. It both creates and signifies unity; it is the source and the crown of all unity. In the Eucharist, all Christians form one Body, the Body of Christ, and the Eucharist becomes the very best prayer for unity. A sign of unity, the Eucharist is also today a powerful sign of disunity. Ultimately, sacramental intercommunion will constitute the realization of visible unity. It must not be overlooked that intercommunion can also be a means for unity.

The churches disagree on intercommunion, on its uses and meaning, and on its conditions and requirements. The convictions of all churches must of course be respected, but further study and dialogue on this matter are imperative.

Unity cannot be visibly manifest until the ministry of the Church is common to all and recognized by all. Further, there must be a ministry of unity in the Church, a function fulfilled by bishops in the episcopal churches and by the World Council of Churches and other synods among the churches of the Reformed tradition. Prayer and dialogue are necessary to bring about this unity of the ministry at the service of truth.

Unity is central to Max Thurian; his books and articles, his work and life, his prayer: all are shot through with this vision of the final living union of all Christians in the Kingdom of God.

"The great heresy today is to be opposed to this movement for unity, to reject this march toward the unity of all Christians."[1]

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[1] Thurian, "Le concile de Chalcédoine," p. 53. See also VUT, p. 16.

CHAPTER IX

A CATHOLIC APPRAISAL

Introduction

The ecclesiological thought and work of Max Thurian has been fully presented, analysed, and criticized. It remains to summarize the findings of this study, to isolate the major problems, to locate Thurian within the theological currents of Christian theology, and to draw necessary conclusions.

This final chapter, therefore, will attempt, first of all, to summarize the key concepts of Thurian's ecclesiology. Then, an effort will be made to situate him within the Reformed tradition, to ascertain what he owes to the great minds of Reformed theology, past and present. Finally, an appraisal of his work from a Catholic viewpoint will be presented, by means of the isolation not only of deep and cogent problems, but also of the vast areas of theological and ecumenical harmony.

The Ecumenical Ecclesiology of Thurian: A Summary

The Church

The Church was founded by Jesus Christ in three major events: in the gathering of the Twelve, at the foot of the cross, and at the manifestation at Pentecost. This Church is the new creation of Christ and the Holy Spirit.[1] It is at once the Bride of Christ, the servant of God, the continuity of Israel--prophetic, priestly, and royal, a pilgrim Church on its way to the Kingdom.

Paradoxically, the Church is both event and institution, both indefectible and constantly reformed.

If we look at the Church as at a community, it is a family, a brotherhood, the people of God bound to Christ by faith and baptism, nourished by Word and sacrament, knowing and confessing Jesus as Lord and Christ. This community is constituted by the Eucharist and manifested not as a global body, but in local churches.

The mission of the Church is its presence in the world. It is a sign of the presence of the living Christ, a sign and parable of the Kingdom-already-here, the ambassador of Christ and instrument of his salvation. But the Church is not identical to Christ, nor is it the Kingdom.

The invisible Church is the entire people of God, not only the baptized. The visible Church lies at the heart of this great invisible family of God. It is a sign and sacrament of the latter. In the celebration of the liturgy, the Church becomes the visible Body of Christ, manifested locally and universally. The visible Church is institution.

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[1] It would be both redundant and annoying to footnote each of the statements in this summary separately. All material covered here (pp. 273-87) is found in the body of the dissertation where reference is fully noted. Thus only a few notes concerning quotation or explanation will be necessary.

The Church is one, holy, catholic, and apostolic.[1] The Church is radically holy because it is united to Christ its Head, who alone is perfectly holy. It is holy in the Word which it proclaims, in the sacraments which it celebrates, in the order of love and unity which it commands and maintains. The Body of Christ is imperfect, even sinful, in its members; yet its members are sinners who are constantly pardoned.

The Church is catholic; that is, it possesses fullness: fullness of truth, of life, of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. It is also rich in fullness of space and time, for it embraces every culture and nation and possesses a continuity of tradition. The idea of *universality* is not absent from this concept of *catholic* fullness. It is only the universal Church which possesses this fullness, and the individual Christian must submit his judgment to the judgment of the universal Church. Further, the Christian can have assurance of truth only in a Church-reading of the Scriptures, that is, in the Scriptures as read and explained by the Church and within the Church, the ecumenical community of believers of all places and times.

The Church is apostolic in its fidelity to the Holy Scripture, in its celebration of the sacraments instituted by Christ and in the continuity of its ministry.

In fundamental faith, in sacramental life, and in essential ministry, the Church is indefectible. The Church can be certain of her basic credo (because of the ecumenical reading of the Scripture), but neither the Church nor even the ecumenical councils of the Church are infallible. Infallibility belongs to the Word of God alone; the ministry of interpretation of the Word is not infallible.

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[1] Unity will be considered separately. See below, pp. 285-86.

In spite of its fallibility and imperfections, the Church commands our obedience--not the easy obedience "to God alone," but obedience to Christ in his Church, in communion with all our brothers and under the leadership of the shepherds of the Church.[1]

Through the Church flows the lifestream of the communion of saints: a bond uniting all men, past, present, and future, one to another and to their Lord. The communion of saints links all Christians to the Virgin Mary, who, within the Church, is a sign and type of the believing Church. She is the Daughter of Zion, the quintessential Remnant, the first Christian woman. She is sign of the fullness of grace within the Church, and a sign of consecration, of poverty, of the novelty of the Kingdom. Mary, who should be a source of unity, remains a source of division; this sad fact poses a great ecumenical task for the future.

The Word

The Church is called together by the Word of God. The Church is governed by the Word and lies always under the judgment of the Word. The ministry of the Church is essentially a ministry of the Word.

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[1] Thurian, "Spiritualité protestante," pp. 378-79.

Although the Word of God and the Scripture are not identical, the latter is a living Word transmitted within the life of the Church. The Holy Scriptures are the objective data of revelation, the original tradition, the place of truth in the Church, and, conjointly with tradition, transmit the Word in the Church. The Scriptures are validly interpreted only by the whole Church, in ecumenical reading, in the light of tradition.

Tradition is necessary to understand and explain Scripture, for the Church cannot base the whole of her teaching on Scripture alone. Tradition is the life of the Scriptures in the Church, the transmitter of the Word, the very life of the Church in faith. Moreover, tradition constitutes the catholicity of the Church in time.

To interpret the Scriptures and to seek the truth in unity, the Church sometimes convokes an ecumenical council. The council seeks a fresh formulation of unchanging truth. The conciliar faith has normative authority for the Church, but the councils are not infallible; dogmas may be called into question or contradicted. Ultimately, only the Word of God is truly infallible. While awaiting a truly ecumenical council of the future--involving the whole Church--the World Council of Churches acts as a "provisional" council, exercising a ministry of catholicity in the Church.

Eucharist, Liturgy, and Sacraments

A sacrament is a sign and a mystery, explained by the Word of God, celebrated in the Church by the Church and communicating Christ's life to the Church. Max Thurian maintains that there are six true sacraments in the Church. Departing from the larger Protestant tradition, he sees absolution (penance), confirmation, healing (anointing) and ordination as sacraments, along with, of course, baptism and the Eucharist.

Baptism, orders and confirmation are conferred by the sacramental rite of the laying-on of hands, a sign of strength and vocation. Healing, also a sign of strength, is further a sign of the triumph of the Kingdom over sin and evil.

All sacraments renew and deepen baptism, which is immersion into the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Baptism anoints, illumines, consecrates, and ordains the Christian to the royal priesthood of the Church for service in and to the world. This great sign of visible unity makes us all brothers in the one family of Christ. Christian initiation includes baptism of water, baptism of the Spirit, catechism, and first communion. Baptism of the Spirit (which is not confirmation), conferred by the laying-on of hands, impresses a permanent seal on the Christian and confers on him the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Confirmation, a second "ordination" of laymen, consecrates them to service _in_ the Church. God commits himself through confirmation to strengthen the believer's faith and to renew the gifts of the Spirit. Truly a sacrament, confirmation is not part of initiation, but rather a new consecration. Along with orders, confirmation is reserved to the bishop.

To the sacrament of the Eucharist, Thurian devotes, as might be expected, a great deal of thought. The Eucharist is an action of Christ in his Church, a presentation of Christ's sacrifice on Calvary, a sacrificial memorial. It is a banquet of thanksgiving and intercession, the sacrament of community, of charity, and the eschatological sign of the Kingdom.

The Eucharist makes the Church; it nourishes and builds the Church in unity, for it is the source and crown of all unity. In the Eucharist, all are formed into one body; ministers and laypeople are truly united. The presence and participation of the community are essential to the celebration of the Eucharist. The Eucharist must be offered only within the Church, where alone Word and Spirit are truly united.

Thurian believes firmly in the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist. He sees intercommunion as both a means to visible unity and as a result, or final realization, of visible unity. In turn, he analyses various theories of intercommunion as held by the Roman Catholic, Orthodox, Anglican, Lutheran, and Reformed traditions, and criticizes each.

The liturgy of the Church, including the celebration of the Divine Office and the other sacramental rites in addition to the Eucharist, receives attention in Thurian's writings. Liturgy, an action both of Christ and of the whole people of God, *expresses* the Church, that is, the local congregation. It must be a living experience of the Word, really catholic, neither immediately accessible (which would render it devoid of mystery or intelligence) nor empty. Liturgy is a manifestation of the royal priesthood of the people of God. It creates unity: a true unanimity in pluralism.

The Ministry of the Church

The ministry of the Church to the world is essentially a ministry of the Word. This ministry, this dialogue of the Church with the world, expands the Church to her truly catholic dimensions. Not a fortress, the Church must love the world and must be sensitive to the signs of the times. This ministry, which ought to be present everywhere, is an action of the entire people of God: both ordained ministers and laypeople. It is a royal and prophetic priesthood for the salvation of all men.

The prophetic Church, as sign of Christ the prophet, must praise, teach, catechize, preach, and bear witness. As priest and sign of Christ's sacrifice, the Church, through sacrifice and intercession, consecrates the world to God. The royal Church, sign of Christ's victory, has a ministry of unity and love. The Church must sanctify the world, illumine it, discern within it the true values of creation.

Monks, who are truly laymen, live as a small-scale model of the Church; thus they exercise a royal and prophetic priesthood in the midst of the world. The monk is a sign: a sign of the Church, of waiting for God, of the Kingdom to come. A monastic community is made real by prayer, especially the Eucharist, but must also be in constant dialogue with the world.

The monk lives in celibacy until the return of Jesus Christ. As celibate, he is a sign of the Kingdom, of a new order, a sign of the resurrection of the dead. As a dialectic sign, celibacy is complementary with marriage. Thus marriage is not a sacrament, but a life vocation wholly of the order of creation.

Ministry in the Church

The Church has within it an ordained ministry, a ministry _to_ the Church, which ministry is a service of Word, sacraments, and authority. This ministry is a sign of unity and of the ministry of Christ. Ministry makes the Church legitimate. Although Christians owe obedience to pastors, the pastors hold authority only as a service of unity in truth and charity. The whole Church ordains and consecrates new ministers, and all ministers serve the whole Church, the one Church universal.

Ministry in the Church has been diversely organized according to the concrete demands of each period of history. Indeed, the Church must allow for a multiformity of ministry, at the same time ridding itself of non-theological or accidental factors in ministry which impede the progress of visible unity.

The pastor is the focus, the nucleus of the ministry. The pastors, necessary to the Church, share in the prophetic, priestly and royal ministry of Christ. As prophet, the pastor preaches and teaches the Word, catechizes and witnesses; as priest he offers sacrifice and intercession by presenting the memorial of Christ in the Eucharist; as sharing in the kingship of Christ, he administers the sacraments and the authority of a shepherd.

Thurian proposes that the pastors might work at a secular job and receive less intellectual training (to avoid excessive "clericalization"). Perhaps also pastors might live in communities. In such a life form they would be a sign of the collegiality of the Church; for the pastors of a local city church do really form a college. Christ governs his Church through a college of pastors. The whole college of pastors may indeed function as a "collective" bishop.

However, the college may have a president, the episcopos, or bishop. To Thurian, bishop designates a function, not a state; the bishop is a pastor; he exercises no new ministry as a result of his episcopacy, but he serves a broader territorial expansion and holds a greater ecumenical responsibility. He is the pastor of a local or regional church, and as such he must act with his college of presbyters and not independently.

The bishop is a sign of Christ the Bishop, a sign and instrument of the apostles, a sign of order and discipline. The bishop is essentially a minister of Word and sacraments.

He is the minister of unity, both in his local church and in the universal Church, for he must be in communion with his brother bishops. He manifests the presence of the universal Church in the local church and the presence of the local church in the universal Church. The bishop is the guardian of Scripture and the promoter of tradition; he must accurately transmit the deposit of faith. Further, he is the minister for home affairs, for foreign affairs, for education.

The sacraments of order and confirmation are reserved to the bishop. According to Thurian, bishops are necessary to the Church. They cannot be "phased out," although many of the accidental accretions of the office can and should be shorn away. Thurian sees the thought of the Reformed Church today moving from its earlier presbyterial-synodal structure to a presbyterial-synodal-episcopal structure.

Thurian proposes that there should be two kinds of bishops: the missionary bishops, who would be itinerant, engaged in founding new churches, in renewal, in communication; and resident bishops, the pastors of local churches. In these roles, they would be a fuller sign of the complete apostolic ministry.

The apostles are still a living and permanent witness in the Church. As founders and eyewitnesses, with fullness of power, they were unique; but as transmitters of the Gospel and as ministers of the unity of the Church, they live in the ministry of the Church today, particularly manifest in the college of bishops. There is a real and concrete continuity in the Church which we call the apostolic succession. This succession is not solely the uninterrupted series of bishops in time, but primarily it is faithfulness to the doctrine of the apostles and to the Church of the New Testament.

There is other ministry in the Church. Deacons exercise the ministry of service. They are laymen who assist in preaching, baptism, administering communion, etc. Moreover, the Church must recognize and order charismatic ministry within herself; for there are those called to be apostles, prophets, teachers, miracle workers, healers. A balance must be struck between charismatic gifts and liberty on the one hand, and institutional ministry on the other.

Is there a pastor of the pastors? Is there a ministry of primacy in the Church? Thurian maintains that to exercise primacy, a church must be a typical church and its bishop a model of bishops. The primatial church is at the service of unity; it does not rule the Church, it is not a monarchy to force exterior unity or uniformity. The primacy today may be held by different churches, as the Spirit may choose.

The ministers of the Church are consecrated by the sacrament of ordination. Ordination, a true sacrament, is indispensible for the transmission of the Holy Spirit and for union with the apostles. Ordination is a prayer, a legitimization, a dedication, a begetting. Truly, the whole Church ordains a minister, but the particular human minister through whom the Church ordains is a bishop (this may be a "collective" bishop, that is, a college of pastors).

By ordination, the Church discerns God's gift. In this sense only does this sacrament confer a character: the Church gives a consecration in recognition of a charism given by God.

Unity

"That they may all be one" is the will of the Lord. But the churches are not fully one. The scandal and sin of division is real; it has compromised unity and enfeebled the witness of the Church. The Eucharist is the sign not only of unity, but of disunity also; for we cannot all yet share the one Table. We must repent of this sin of egoism.

Central to Thurian's ecclesiology is the theme of unity. The Church is one, for the Body of Christ is one. This fundamental unity cannot be destroyed. Unity, the gift of God and his will for his Church is caused by baptism. It is an image of the unity of the Trinity, dynamic not static, directed towards the fullness of life and truth and towards the reconciliation of all men, towards the final unity of the Kingdom, still a secret of God's will.

Invisibly all Christians are brothers, all sons of God, but unity is not now fully manifested visibly; for to be perfectly united there must be among all Christians the same baptism, confession of the same Lord and Saviour, the same apostolic faith, gospel, bread, and prayer, a common witness and service to all, and a ministry recognized by all.

But a real visible unity does now exist: in baptism, common adherence to the Bible, common prayer and creeds. This unity cannot be destroyed. But we must strive for full and complete visible unity by prayer, preaching and witness, living together, the mutual asking of pardon, and a firm dedication and ecumenical openness. Obedience to the Word of God can bring us to unity. "While we await the unity of all Christians in the Church of Christ, it is in this ecumenical spirit of obedience to the word of God that we can hope to come closest to the thought of the Lord."[1] The liturgy, and above all the Eucharist, create unity.

Authority in the Church should be recognized as a service of unity. A unity of ministry will give form to fundamental unity. Further, there should be a ministry of unity within the Church. There must be, too, a much greater stress on the unity of the local church.[2]

Unity does not mean uniformity, for the universal Church is a community of communities. Rather, there should be a diversity of forms and manifestations of our fundamental unity in faith. There should be also a multiformity of ministry, adapted to the needs of the community and of the times. Ministers are truly ministers of the whole Church assembled in community in the local church.

Finally, to reach unity, all the churches must abandon their exclusive and defensive ideas and join in a great ecumenical going-beyond of the older hardened and juxtaposed positions.

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[1] MrCl, p. 13.

[2] Thurian often praises the Second Vatican Council for its renewed emphasis on the local church.

In the Tradition of the Reform

Max Thurian is solidly anchored in the traditions of the Reformed Church. In Chapter II of this study, a brief exposition of the thoughts of his predecessors was set forth. These are the men who have most influenced both the course of Continental Protestantism and the thought of Thurian: Calvin, Zwingli, Bucer, and Barth. In addition, Roger Schütz, founder and prior of Taizé, has had a most notable influence on Thurian's theology.

It is appropriate now, therefore, after a complete presentation of Thurian's ecclesiology, to point out various similarities, differences, open disagreements, and concurrent theories between the Reformers and Thurian. Perhaps the question often posed can be answered: is Thurian really, at heart, a Catholic or a Protestant? And what precisely is his debt to his heritage?

Again, it will be convenient to examine these questions under the groupings consistently used in this study: the Church, the Word, the Eucharist and the sacraments, ministry, and unity.

The Church

Thurian agrees with Calvin and Bucer that the Church is a community, a fellowship, a living organism, where Christ is lived (Zwingli).[1] He follows Calvin in stating that the

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[1] Again, it would be redundant and confusing to give

Church is recognized by Word and sacrament, rather than Zwingli's criterion that the Church is recognized in the act of confessing the faith.

The Church, the Bride of Christ (Zwingli, Bucer), is manifested not as "the Church," but rather as a particular local community (Zwingli, Barth).

In maintaining the dynamism of the Church as event, Thurian follows the thought of Calvin, Zwingli, and Barth; but contrary to Barth, he holds that the Church is not identical to Christ. Thurian's theology identifies the visible Church with the Body of Christ, in which he disagrees with Calvin, who sees the Church as a society which is becoming the Body of Christ. With Calvin, however, and against Bucer, he sees the Church as not identical to the Kingdom, but rather in the service of the Kingdom. With Barth, Thurian conceives of the Church as a means of grace and the instrument of Christ's salvation.

It is in his conception of the Church invisible and visible that Thurian departs most from the Reformers. Calvin, Zwingli, and Bucer all see the invisible Church as the whole number of the elect only, while Thurian holds that the invisible Church is the entire people of God, not only the elect, and not only the baptized.

To Calvin, Bucer, and Barth, the visible Church will

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reference for the many summary statements to follow. All material covered here can be found in Chapter II (the Reformers) and in Chapters III through VIII above, where reference is fully noted.

be fully manifested only at the Parousia; Thurian seems to hold that the Church is now fully manifested, both locally and universally. With Calvin and Zwingli, he sees the visible Church as institution; Barth, however, disclaims this.

Zwingli and Bucer define the visible Church as the whole community of those grounded on and built up in the Lord Jesus Christ. Thurian, in his clearest definition--the visible Church as sign and sacrament of the invisible Church--comes closest to Barth, who defined the visible Church as the sign of the universal election of all men. According to Calvin, the visible Church is but the faithful remnant.

Thurian describes the Church as one, holy, catholic, and apostolic. It is interesting that he conceives of the holiness of the Church in her Word, sacraments, and order; for in adding order or discipline, he comes closer to Bucer than to Calvin (or Luther). The latter emphasized only the two "marks": Word and sacraments. Barth, of course, presents a full exposition of the Church as one, holy, catholic, and apostolic. Thurian agrees with Barth, too, in asserting the necessity of the ecumenical reading of Scripture for surety of doctrine.

The Word

The paramount importance of the Word of God to all the Reformers is well known. Thurian upholds and re-emphasizes this doctrine. With Calvin and Bucer, he confesses that the Church is always judged by the Word and must, in that light, endlessly reform herself. In many ways, however, as he does with all his ecclesiological ideas, Thurian develops the doctrine of the Word and brings it into twentieth-century thought.[1]

In the concept of the place of the Scriptures and of tradition, he agrees with the Reformers. However, Thurian's doctrine of tradition is much more developed and more highly emphasized because of the ecumenical importance of this topic today. Further, he is freed from the shackles of polemics which so influenced the sixteenth-century Reformers, and is bound closely to his ideas of "ecumenical going-beyond," a far more dynamic concept of doctrinal theology than that available to his forerunners.

The Sacraments

To Zwingli, sacraments are those rites by which men offer themselves to God and thus the Church is assured of a man's faith. Thurian's doctrine of the sacraments is quite the opposite: they are signs which communicate Christ's life to the Church. He agrees with Calvin, however, in positing that the accompanying Word and presence of the congregation are essential to the celebration of the sacraments.

In company with all the Reformers, Thurian believes in the two major sacraments, baptism and the Lord's Supper. Only Zwingli, among all, holds that Christian baptism merely points to real baptism, that it is the same as John's baptism.

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[1] For example, we may note his belief that totality of life has replaced the Word as the primary mark of evangelism and witness today (see above, p. 180).

In his Eucharistic theology, Thurian has a great deal in common with Calvin. With him, he sees the Eucharist as an eschatological banquet, as a sign of the Kingdom, as offered validly only in the Church where alone Word and Spirit are united, as building the Church in unity. Again, he disagrees with Zwingli, who states that the Eucharist only assures the Church of our faith. The Reformers and Thurian are united in stating that the Eucharist makes the Church.

With Calvin, Thurian holds that the presence and participation of the community are essential to the celebration of the Eucharist. And also with Calvin (and Bucer) he firmly believes in the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist. It is well-known that Zwingli did not agree on this point.

Both Luther and Bucer held that absolution (penance) is a sacrament, although Calvin did not. In his doctrine of the other sacraments Thurian departs most radically from Calvin. Healing, order, and confirmation are sacraments to Thurian, but not to any of the others. Thurian devotes a good deal of space in his book on confirmation to Calvin's theology, showing his disagreement and explaining Calvin's theological justification, sometimes rather harshly.[1]

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[1] See CON, pp. 2-8. A rather harsh criticism occurs on page 8: "In such argumentation one finds both a refusal to consider the sacramental mystery, which eludes the realm of sense experience, and a puzzling acceptance of the Church's poverty of charisms. Thereby Calvin involuntarily became the ancestor of pietism, which seeks religious emotions and will not be satisfied with the objectivity of faith and the sacraments; and he shares responsibility in the spawning of sectarian movements which seek outside the Church for charismatic manifestations of the Holy Spirit."

The Ministry of the Church

Calvin does not conceive of the Church as a priesthood of all the faithful, consecrated to the salvation of the world. There are of course historical as well as doctrinal reasons for his view. Thurian follows Martin Bucer much more closely in this matter; however he does not follow Bucer's idea that the primary ministry of the Church is to manifest the divine decree of predestination.

On the role of monasticism, Thurian is almost unique among the Protestants. Luther and Calvin's violent opposition are well known. Even among the Protestant churches today, monastic life represents a great rarity, something a little abnormal, and on the whole, suspect. Here Thurian (and Schütz) stand virtually alone, and must be studied independently of their forerunners and even of their contemporaries.

Dialogue of the Church with the world is of the twentieth century; it cannot be found in the sixteenth-century writers, who rather emphasized conversion of and opposition to the world.

Ministry in the Church

Thurian's concept of a ministry _ad intra_, vis à vis the ministry _ad extra_, or to the world, is drawn from Bucer. All in the Reformed tradition agree that the ministry within the Church is primarily a service of the Word and sacraments. Thurian's idea of ministry as a service of unity is very close to Calvin's idea of ministry as the sinew of the Church. All are agreed that authority is service.

Calvin and Zwingli classify ministers along strict New Testament lines: the former teaches that there must be in the Church pastors, doctors, elders, and deacons; the latter posits apostles, prophets, evangelists and pastors (doctors). Thurian, as has been seen, singles out pastors, bishops, deacons, and charismatic ministry. It would be complex but not impossible to harmonize these three viewpoints.[1] However, each approaches the same ideas, the same services and functions in slightly different ways from different, but equally valid, vantage points. Perhaps it is best to let it stand this way.

Karl Barth is here in radical disagreement. Alone among the men considered does he deny any distinction between clergy and laity. In their common priesthood, through baptism, Christians are called upon to minister not only to the world but to each other.

Ministers are necessary to the Church (Calvin), and according to Zwingli belong to its very being. Thurian adheres to these views; ministry, for him, makes the Church legitimate.

Calvin does see the possibility of bishops; however, unlike Thurian, he does not believe them to be necessary to the Church. Calvin and Thurian are agreed that the bishop is the servant of unity in love, and a sign of order and discipline.

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[1] For example, elder-presbyter-pastor-doctor is really essentially the same office; even Thurian would hold that some, but not all, pastors are called to be doctors. Also, as has already been noted in Chapter II, Calvin accepted the existence, both theological and practical, of bishops; and on the other hand, Thurian allows for a "collective bishop."

Calvin holds charismatic ministry as necessary to the Church, while Thurian simply concedes its existence and calls upon the Church to recognize and place in order the charismatic gifts. The doctrine of primacy is not examined cooly in the early Reformers; the milieu of polemics and sharp division prevented this.

Unity

Karl Barth asserts that the Church is one because the Body of Christ is one. And Thurian makes that statement his own. Although Thurian devotes proportionally much more of his theology to the question of unity, this idea is not lacking in the Reformers. For Calvin, unity is vital to the Church; the basis and criterion of unity is the Word of God. All Christians, as Calvin says, are united in the same covenant. But in none of his predecessors do we find the extensive, careful and full doctrine of unity that we find in Thurian. Again, this sets him firmly in the twentieth century.

Thurian, Schütz, and Taizé

Between Max Thurian and Roger Schütz there is, obviously, no disagreement. They hold and say so much in common that it is really impossible to say, with regard to any given idea, who follows whom or who is the originator. Thurian is more the theologian, Schütz more the spiritual leader, but

Thurian's ecclesiology is so deeply spiritual, so deeply imbedded in Taizé, that it cannot be separated from these currents. The only conclusion, therefore, is one of mutual and equal influence.

Schütz and Thurian hold the same ideas on bishops, on the meaning and mission of monasticism, on dialogue with the world, on the mission of the Church. But it is on unity that their communion of ideas is most evident. Taizé as a sign of unity and also of disunity; the dynamic nature of unity; the means to and necessity of unity and its direction--towards the reconciliation of all men; unanimity in pluralism: these are the key ideas of Schütz and Thurian, and these are the ideas lived at Taizé.

Conclusions

It is possible to isolate, in summary fashion, some of the main ideas of the Reformers which go to form the fabric of Thurian's theology, and also some of the outstanding differences.

If a choice must be made to discover whose influence is most obvious on Thurian's thought, the answer would be John Calvin. This is to be expected. Calvin is after all the major and enduring formative influence on the Swiss Reformed Church, in which ambience Thurian was raised, schooled, and ordained.[1]

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[1] Then, too, Taizé--the most complete formative influence on Thurian--is thoroughly Calvinist. For an interesting presentation and analysis of this fact, see Bloesch, Centers of Christian Renewal, pp. 63-65.

On the other hand, the major areas of disagreement are with Zwingli. To say precisely why this is true would be difficult, even, probably, for Thurian. However, a few facts may contribute to our understanding. The totally ecumenical orientation of Taizé and Schütz, and therefore of Thurian, would be conscious of Roman Catholic and other confessional needs and theology, to which the currents set in motion by Zwingli are considerably more incompatible than those of Calvin. Further, the general development of Reformed theology itself, cognizant of the changed philosophical milieu, has tended to reject Zwingli's ideas on the sacraments and on the visible Church. Thus Thurian's thought is Calvinist rather than Zwinglian. Neither Bucer nor Barth can be ignored, however, since Thurian clearly has received key ideas and orientations of thinking from both theologians.

In certain predominant themes, Thurian is set squarely within the Reform: the Church as a dynamic fellowship, not the Kingdom, manifested only in the local churches; the absolutely primal position of the Word; the necessity of both Word and congregational community for the celebration of the sacraments; the offices and functions of the ministry; the theology of the Eucharist.

The few major areas of disagreement or departure (or growth) are also evident: the invisible and visible Church and the elect; the truly sacramental nature of confirmation, healing, and orders; the existence and position of monasticism and therefore of celibacy. In each case, the position of

Thurian can be seen as truly an ecumenical striving, while at the same time faithful to and growing out of his Reformed heritage.

One other interesting divergence has already been pointed out: Calvin carefully avoids the doctrine of the universal priesthood of the faithful. The result is a difference of atmosphere in the whole theology of baptism and confirmation; for Thurian sees these sacraments almost entirely within the context of royal priesthood, for which they are a consecration. Calvin cannot see them in that light (and of course denies the sacramentality of confirmation altogether).

Thurian is firmly a man of the Reform. Is he also Catholic? Does he form a truly ecumenical bridge between the two traditions? Here we perceive the real problems of his ecclesiology for a Catholic.

A Catholic Appraisal

Agreement

It is said that the Church of the United Brethren in Christ (now absorbed into the United Methodist Church) was founded when Philip William Otterbein, after debating theology for a long time with another divine, suddenly clasped the hand of his antagonist in a joyful sense of new agreement, and exclaimed, "We are brethren!" An exhaustive study of the theological writings of Max Thurian will bring the Roman Catholic theologian to the same joy and union: truly we are brethren.

The points where Thurian agrees with Roman Catholic tradition and with Catholic theologians are most numerous. A careful reading of chapters III through VIII of this study will reveal the almost continuous community of thought between Thurian and the Catholics, brought about in no small part by Thurian's dedication to unity and reconciliation. Perhaps it will be sufficient here, without too much repetition, to summarize some of the more important and obvious areas of agreement.

Thurian speaks of the Church under the same images as modern Catholic ecclesiology: Bride, pilgrim, fellowship, people of God, new creation, Body of Christ.[1] To him the Church is both indefectible and always undergoing reform.[2] The Church is not the Kingdom, but strains towards the completed Kingdom.[3] The Church is constituted and expressed by the Eucharist.[1] The mission of the Church is to bring Christ to all men, to be a sign of Christ and of his Kingdom.[2] Mary and Israel are figures of the Church.[3] The invisible Church is the entire family of God, of every nation and every time.[4]

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[1] The Constitution Lumen Gentium, I, 6,7,8; II; VII. The edition of the Constitution that I have used is Walter M. Abbott, S.J. (ed.), The Documents of Vatican II (New York: Guild, America, and Association Press, 1966), pp. 14-96, although I will cite the standard chapter and section reference rather than a page reference from this book. The Constitution was promulgated November 21, 1964, by Pope Paul VI. Since then, obviously, there have been many further developments in ecclesiology. The literature on the Church, both before and after the Second Vatican Council, is staggeringly large. It has, however, seemed to me sufficient to cite only from Lumen Gentium when referring to the Catholic viewpoint in this chapter. First of all, this, above anything, represents an "official" theology, agreed upon by all the bishops in ecumenical council; and it is the most recent of such statements. Second, the literature is so vast, and still constantly growing, that the task of finding a consensus ecclesiology on all points would be a separate study, at the least of great magnitude, and very likely impossible. Some of the more outstanding (by scholarly and critical agreement) books have, however, been consulted.

[2] Lumen Gentium I, 8; II, 9.

[3] Ibid., I, 5.

The ministry of the Word, the Scripture as a living Word within the Church, the importance of tradition: all are firmly held by Thurian.[5]

Like the Catholic Church, Thurian sees baptism and confirmation within the framework of the universal priesthood of all the faithful, and he emphasizes this latter doctrine very strongly.[6] He upholds the role of monasticism and of celibacy.[7] He sees the Eucharist as the sacrament of unity and firmly upholds the doctrine of the Real Presence.[8]

He confesses the necessity of the ordained ministry within the Church, and agrees that there must be pastors and bishops, deacons and charismatic ministries; and he upholds the doctrine of collegiality.[9]

Thurian believes that there is already visible unity in the Church, and that all Christians are bound to work towards final perfect unity.[1] But we must have unity of faith with a pluralism of manifestations and forms.[2]

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[1] _Ibid_., I, 3.

[2] _Ibid_., I, 1,5.

[3] _Ibid_., II, 9; VIII.

[4] _Ibid_., II, 13.

[5] See RPV for a point-by-point comparison of the thought of Thurian and Schütz with the Second Vatican Council's _Constitution on Divine Revelation_.

[6] _Lumen Gentium_, II, 10,11,12; IV, 34,35.

[7] _Ibid_., VI.

[8] _Ibid_., I, 3.

[9] _Ibid_., III, _passim_.

Problems

But it cannot be said that Thurian is really another Catholic theologian. Many major problems appear from an analysis of his thought, and these problems remain. Let us deal with the most obvious and crucial of these difficulties. Many have already been discussed as they have arisen within the progress of this study. There are others, no doubt, which may appear and will not be mentioned here: some of these are only seeming difficulties--differences in approach or terminology, perhaps. Others are minor in nature theologically, although they may be important to discipline. Others may be obviously patient of solution in the ordinary course of theological dialogue. Finally, however, some problems must be faced.

Concerning the Church Universal and the Churches

The Church is constituted by the celebration of the Eucharist. This is a local church, for the Church is manifested concretely only as local churches.[3] Does the local church possess catholicity? Thurian's theology of catholicity sees it as a fullness of truth and a fullness in space, time, and life. A study of his doctrine leads to the conclusion that this catholicity cannot be possessed by the local church; rather, catholicity possessed by the universal Church is manifested concretely in the local church.[1]

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[1] See the *Decree on Ecumenism*, I, 4 (Abbott, *The Documents of Vatican II*, pp. 343-66). Also *Lumen Gentium*, II.

[2] *Decree on Ecumenism*, I, 4.

[3] *Lumen Gentium*, III, 26.

The universal Church is the community of these communities. Since the Church is catholic, that is, possesses the fullness of truth, the individual Christian must always rely on the judgment of the Church; personal opinions must be submitted to this judgment. Here is the problem: this catholicity, this fullness, and therefore the foundation for this universal judgment, is manifested, or exists concretely, only in the local church. To what, then, must the Christian be subject? Strict logic would seem to require that the Christian submit to the judgment of the local church, since that is where, and only where, the judgment of the universal Church will be manifested.

But this cannot be Thurian's conclusion. For, first of all, it is quite evident that the local churches do not agree even on many absolutely basic points of faith (or morality). And by local church, the ecumenically oriented Thurian clearly means churches of various denominations and communions. Second, he sets as the source of this universal judgment the "ecumenical reading" of Scripture, that is, the Scripture as read and explained by the Church, the total and ecumenical community of believers of all places and of all times.[1]

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[1] "In these communities . . . Christ is present. By virtue of Him the one, holy, catholic and apostolic church gathers together." (Ibid.)

The Christian, therefore, cannot rely on the judgment only of the local church. This alone endangers the whole fabric of Thurian's reasoning on the complex interrelations of catholicity, the universal church, and the local churches.

The other side of the coin is equally difficult. Assuming that Thurian refers to the judgment of the universal Church and prescinding from the problem just mentioned, how does one find this universal judgment? What, precisely and really, is its source? This problem has already been discussed in Chapter III.[2] In fact, no solution exists. There are facets of a solution in Thurian's theology: a future truly ecumenical council; unity only tomorrow through a dynamic ecumenical going-beyond, etc. In the last analysis, however, the questions remain unanswered, and in view of Thurian's present theological structure, unanswerable.

Further, there is brought to the fore here the question of authentic magisterium. Indeed, the Catholic solution to the problems above can be found in this concept.[3] To Thurian, only the Word is infallible; there is no infallible ministry of the Word, that is, teaching magisterium--not even an ecumenical council and certainly not the bishops.

On these points, then, there is clear disagreement between Thurian and Catholic thought: catholicity which commands assent, universal judgment of the universal Church, authentic magisterium, infallibility.

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[1] Thurian, "Spiritualité protestante," p. 376.

[2] See above, pp. 63-67.

[3] For example, see Lumen Gentium, III, 25.

Unity and the Church, Visibility and Invisibility

A serious problem in Thurian's ecclesiology is his confusion of visible and invisible Church when confronted with visible and invisible unity. This has already been fully analysed;[1] however, it might be in place here to bring to bear a Catholic viewpoint. The Constitution *Lumen Gentium* does not speak of a visible or invisible Church, but Thurian's invisible Church is exactly described in II, 13: "All men are called to belong to the new People of God." And this Church possesses unity: "All men are called to be part of this catholic unity of the people of God. . . . And there belong to it or are related to it . . . the whole of mankind."

It is in the concept of the visible Church and its unity that the difficulty lies. To the Catholic, the Church is a visible sacrament of unity.[2] Its unity, therefore, is in the order of sign; while the invisible unity of the entire family of God is real. Real visible unity also is symbolized (and achieved) by the Eucharist. This solves the dilemma, for though we are all one family and all Christians are one through baptism, visible division is a fact.

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[1] See above, pp. 242-43.

[2] *Lumen Gentium*, II, 9.

Against this, Thurian's confusions stand in even clearer relief. He is trapped by his statements that the visible Church _is_ the Body of Christ, and that the Body of Christ cannot be divided. His only answer is that unity is _disguised_; that we see disunity.

This cannot be considered as an irreconcilable difference between Thurian and Catholic theology. A new clarity of thinking is needed. Dialogue and ecumenical going-beyond can surely yield harmony in this important area.

Scripture, Tradition, and the Word

In Chapter IV, it has been noted that there are problems in Thurian's doctrine of the Word. Although this has been fully analysed there, it would be well to look again at some of these difficulties in comparison with Catholic teaching.

Essentially, there are two problems: terminology and relationships. Often it is unclear just what precisely Thurian means by Scripture, Gospel, the Word, revelation, or deposit of faith, especially since he frequently interchanges the terms. Further, and largely as a result of this terminological confusion, it is difficult to isolate the clear position and interrelations of Scripture, tradition, and the Word.

To summarize the terminology: he seems to equate Scripture, Gospel, and revelation: all meaning the teaching of Jesus and the Church's life in Jesus in the broadest way. The "deposit of faith" seems to be the Gospel or revelation observed at any one moment, statically, that is, a thing to be preserved and handed on.

The Constitution on Divine Revelation of the Second Vatican Council seems to agree on the concept of deposit of faith: "Sacred tradition and Sacred Scripture form one sacred deposit of the word of God which is committed to the Church."[1]

To the question, is the Word of God contained in Scripture or is it identical to the Scripture, Thurian, as we have seen, holds that the Word is Scripture only insofar as it is Scripture read, explained and preached within the Church. For it is not a dead or static or "preserved" Word, but a living Word in a living Church. The Catholic view is slightly different: "For the sacred Scriptures contain the word of God and, since they are inspired, really are the word of God."[2] Here, each side has much to learn from the other; nor are they really in opposition.

Thurian's theology of tradition is very rich. Tradition, for him, is both the act of transmission and the total content of what is transmitted. Tradition is the life of the Scriptures in the Church, the ecumenical reading of the Scriptures. Catholic theology can learn much from these insights.

What appear to be, in the preceding discussion, differences of emphasis or of shading contain at the deepest level something far more serious. It is here that we can glimpse the essential Protestant stand of Thurian. The bedrock problems are two: Word and magisterium. The Word is absolutely primal; it alone is infallible; the Church stands under its judgment. The ministry of transmission and preaching of the Word, however, cannot be infallible: there is no infallible magisterium. Yet, the Word is utterly dependent on ministry and the ministry on the Word; this interdependence cannot be dissolved.[1] Thus, Thurian must propound the doctrines of "ecumenical reading of the Scriptures," of tradition as the life of Scriptures in the Church: these are his magisterium. The Word, in a sense, becomes its own magisterium. Is the ministry then merely an agent, a catalyst?

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[1] Constitution on Divine Revelation, 10 (Abbott, The Documents of Vatican II, pp. 111-28).

[2] Ibid., 24.

The matter ends in questions, and to some extent in confusion. What stands out is a clear division: the infallible magisterium of the Catholic tradition; the absolute impossibility of infallible magisterium in the Reformed Tradition.

Problems in the Doctrine of the Sacraments

There are, of course, many problems in the sacramental theology of Max Thurian. It would be outside the scope of a study restricted to his ecclesiology to analyse the purely sacramental difficulties. However, certain problems which touch upon the Church itself must be at least mentioned.

Thurian, following Calvin, is very strong in requiring that a sacrament cannot be valid unless the Word is preached and unless the community is present and participating.

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[1] See above, p. 106.

If Calvin is read by a twentieth-century Catholic (while keeping in mind the polemical climate of the sixteenth century), there is no real disagreement with the first point:

> For we ought to understand the word not as one whispered without meaning and without faith, a mere noise, like a magic incantation, which has the force to consecrate the element. Rather, it should, when preached, make us understand what the visible sign means.[1]

No longer does the Catholic Church use "Latin among unlearned men" or "a hoarse whisper which few could hear."[2] The "words" which accompany the celebration of the sacraments in the Catholic Church are within the context of total prayer--and recognizably so--rather than simply isolated "words of institution." The mentality which wished to isolate the precise few efficacious words no longer holds sway. Further, the whole rite is deeply scriptural, and often a homily is preached. It is inconceivable that this would not fulfill Calvin's requirement, and therefore Thurian's.

Therefore, there really is no disagreement; surely the Word is necessary. A true ecumenical going-beyond has taken place. The old hardened positions have dissolved into a new and meaningful synthesis.

The essential presence of the congregation for the validity of the sacrament is still a clear difference, for a Catholic priest may truly offer the sacrament of the Eucharist absolutely alone and unattended (in certain rare circumstances). In the Reformed Church, however, there simply is no Eucharist if a minister should celebrate alone.[1] Catholic practice, however, tends today almost exclusively to communal celebration.

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[1] ICR, IV.xiv.4.

[2] *Ibid*.

Again, as with other surface differences which seem to be easily resolvable in the future, there are underlying positions which tend to harden and complicate the matter. Catholic theology states that all Christians, in the Eucharist, offer the divine victim to God and themselves with it; and, further, the ordained priest offers the Eucharist to God in the name of all the people.[2] But Thurian does not want to admit that the Church herself enters into the Eucharistic sacrifice as offerer and offered.[3] Moreover, Thurian denies mediation to the ordained ministry, and takes great pains to show that there are no priests properly so-called in the New Covenant.[4]

So the Catholic priest as mediator (within and dependent upon the mediation of Christ) can offer the Church to God in the name of all, though unattended. But the Reformed minister must celebrate with and within the participating community, for offering the Church is not basically what is being done.

Another sacramental problem, quite current today, is that of intercommunion. Thurian's ideas on this matter have already been fully presented.[1] It is true that there is a lack of unity on this matter, but is there a rift between the Catholic position and the personal position of Thurian? This is hard to say, for although he presents the Catholic, Orthodox, Anglican, Lutheran, and Reformed viewpoints, he finds fault with all of them on some points. The key to his own idea may possibly be found in two of his statements: the truth may be found somewhere in all viewpoints; and intercommunion cannot take place at all unless all Christians commit themselves to seek visible unity and to live in effective charity.[2] Very probably, the assumption is correct that Thurian is closer to the Catholic viewpoint: intercommunion is principally a sign of real and existing unity, and should not be practiced by those in real disunity unless they are really seeking unity.

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[1] See above, pp. 152-54.

[2] Lumen Gentium, II, 10, 11.

[3] Schlitzer, "A Protestant Ecumenical on the Eucharist," p. 133.

[4] See above, pp. 143-44.

Finally, two problems should be mentioned which, while not germane to this ecclesiological study, bear further investigation: the doctrine of six sacraments as opposed to the Roman Catholic doctrine of seven and the ordinary Protestant doctrine of two; and the precise position of confirmation within Christian initiation or not. It must be mentioned that since Thurian denies that marriage is a sacrament, he is clearly in opposition to Catholic thought here.

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[1] See above, pp. 261-67.

[2] Ibid.

The Ministry: Bishops and Pastors

Thurian has a well-developed theology on the role of bishops in the Church; in fact, he admits the necessity of the episcopate. For this, the Catholic can rejoice. However, there is a radical and important difference of approach. For Thurian, the pastor is the center of the ministry; the bishop is _essentially_ a pastor--as bishop he receives no new ministry, merely broader expansion and greater ecumenical responsibility. For a Catholic, the bishop is the center; pastors (priests) are delegates of the college of bishops. This difference in approach, as has already been noted in Chapter VII, can have far-reaching implications. For example, is the ministry of the Church vested essentially in a college of bishops of the universal Church or in the colleges of pastors of each local church?

No doubt Thurian's history of the ministry has as much been influenced by his theology as it has in turn helped to form it. One can arrange the documents of ministerial history, even the New Testament, to fit one's own general orientation. Also, his insistence on the lack of true (mediatorial) priesthood in the New Covenant is a powerful factor in his theology of ministry.

The pastor-centered focus must affect Thurian's ideas on apostolic succession.[1] And we have seen how the succession depends on "ministers" in general, rather than specifically on bishops (or pastors). For the Holy Spirit unites the apostles with their successors through the ordination of ministers, and the new minister is inserted into the succession of ministries of the Church.[1] Moreover, because of the knotty problem of the lack of bishops in the Reformed churches, Thurian must emphasize faithfulness to apostolic doctrine as the heart of the apostolic succession.

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[1] As the people-of-God-centered focus strongly influences Küng: Küng, _The Church_, pp. 354-59.

Further, a bishop is in the apostolic tradition only inasmuch as he is in communion with other bishops as a sign of Church unity. This lets loose a flood of ecumenical problems. In fact, bishops of diverse churches are not in communion, either in faith or in sacrament. Are they within the succession? Who decides the criteria of this communion? We are thrown back again to the problem of the universal Church, its judgment, and its fullness of truth.

We cannot agree with Thurian, therefore, that in his method of pastor-centered focus versus the Catholic bishop-centered idea there is no dogmatic problem, merely a question of historical approach. On the contrary, there are many and serious problems, which must be the basis for a fruitful ecumenical dialogue.

Before proceeding away from the area of ministry, it would be remiss not to mention again that Thurian has contributed many splendid new insights: the concept of missionary bishops as distinct from resident bishops, the proposals leading to the "declericalization" of priests in the modern world, the brilliant theology of sacramental character in ordination, among others.[1] We might also mention that his distinction between clergy (pastors and bishops) and laymen (all others, including deacons and monks) is different in some respects from Catholic theology. But like his other insights, it is very rich in meaning and bears careful attention.[2]

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[1] See above, pp. 206-10.

Two Classical Problems: Primacy and the Blessed Virgin Mary

Almost anyone who was asked twenty years ago why the Catholics and Protestants could not unite would have answered, "because of the pope and the Virgin Mary." Perhaps many would say this even today. But when we turn to the theology of Max Thurian and to the post-Vatican II theology of the Catholic Church, the two great causes célèbres have so altered in their course that hope for complete unanimity is firm and no longer a dream.

Both of these topics have been discussed in the body of the dissertation.[3] Therefore we will limit these remarks to the really basic rift that may remain.

Thurian agrees that Peter had primacy, that the early church of Rome had primacy, and even that there can be primacy in the Church today. The function of primacy is to serve as a model church and to preserve catholic unity. Therefore, primacy is looked upon as a *ministry*, and the primatial bishop as a *pastor*: attitudes very fruitful for the Catholic theologian. Thurian could not, at this stage at least, agree with the Catholic that the primacy belongs now *always* with Rome and its bishop; nor would he admit that the primatial bishop has as his function that of doctor to the Church (necessarily). On these points, then, there is still fundamental disagreement.

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[1] See above, pp. 220-22; 213-15; 231-32.

[2] See above, pp. 227-28.

[3] See above, pp. 222-25 and 84-93. The problem of infallibility, related to primacy in the case of the pope, has been mentioned also rather fully in various places, and need not be stated here again.

Along with shared worship services, nothing is more symbolic of the modern ecumenical climate than the changed attitudes towards the Blessed Virgin Mary. The Catholic position has changed considerably. Not only are excesses in Marian devotion politely condemned by the most authoritative document, but theological climate has altered noticeably.[1] Fifty years ago, no Catholic treatise on Mary would have begun with the statement, "We have but one Mediator, as we know from the words of the Apostle: 'For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, himself man, Christ Jesus. . . .'"[2] No longer is there talk of co-redemptrix or co-mediatrix; there was considerable opposition, even among bishops, to the papal pronouncement of Mary as Mother of the Church. Never before has such solicitude been shown to the sensitivities of the separated brethren.[3]

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[1] *Lumen Gentium*, VIII, 67.

[2] *Ibid.*, VIII, 60.

[3] *Ibid.*, VIII, 66, 69.

The change has been not less among the Protestants. Thurian's book, _Marie, mère du Seigneur et figure de l'Eglise_ (1963) is a landmark in this development.[1] The closeness of Thurian's doctrine of Mary to the Catholic theology is remarkable.[2] Aside from a suspicion that his scriptural scholarship is not quite up to date, we can note only four real areas of disagreement.[3]

First, is Mary an ontological figure of the Church, or historical only? This objection has been analysed above (pp. 89-93). Thurian appears to hold the idea of Mary as purely historical figure: that is, what Mary _was_, the Church now _is_. Mary now, therefore, is merely the foremost member of the communion of saints and has, now, no typological or ecclesial function.

In three other main ideas, Thurian also confesses his disagreement. He will not call Mary the Mother of Christians (much less Mother of the Church), and he refuses, in his book, to discuss at all the doctrines of the Immaculate Conception and the Assumption. He has written one extensive article on the Assumption, in which he asserts that he cannot, as a Protestant and as a theologian, accept this dogma.[1] These are manifest differences.

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[1] It has been the subject of more reviews, among both Catholics and Protestants, than any other of his books; and many of these reviews are by first-rate scholars, e.g., Ernst, Boyer, and others.

[2] This has been fully presented above, pp. 84-93.

[3] At least, his scholarship was not up to date at the time of publication of the book on Mary (1963). For example, his statement: "These first pages of St. Luke can also be thought of as the Gospel of Mary, because it is only from her that the first editors of these narratives could have drawn their information" (MMC, p. 11) reflects either ignorance of modern Scripture study or perhaps a spiritual or homiletic orientation rather than a scientific one.

But growth is not ended. In the two classical areas, the papacy and mariology, how far we have come! The unalterable walls have crumbled noticeably; the ecumenical dialogue has fructified into a rapport undreamed of in the past. The future is an arena of hope.

A Note on Method

Finally, we must call attention to the fact that Thurian's theological methods of investigation and presentation are often widely different from those of Catholic scholars, and indeed from other Protestant scholars. He does not necessarily proceed along a logical outline of a problem; he is often careless with his evidence; his theology is subsumed into his far greater ecumenical, spiritual, and pastoral concerns. This will explain many apparent omissions and many seeming difficulties. In his introduction to his one organized catechism, he says, "The chapters of this book take up the principal points of the Christian faith one by one to exhibit them simply. Let no one look here for a developed theology, a complete exposé of the problems."[2]

A fitting description of his work is given in a review of his outstanding book on the Eucharist:

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[1] Thurian, "Le dogme de l'assomption," passim.

[2] LTM, p. ix.

> The author's objective is more than academic; his theological and pastoral purpose is everywhere apparent. . . . His profound religious seriousness is such that, even if it is often necessary to question the quality of his scholarship, it is impossible to deny the strength of his intuition.[1]

Some Final Conclusions

In conclusion, it can be stated that Thurian is truly a theologian of the Reformed tradition, and truly a theologian of the twentieth century. Between his ecclesiology and that of Catholic theologians and Church documents there is far more agreement than disagreement. Major problems do remain, and these areas have been stated and explored in this chapter. Much further study could be done on Thurian's work, particularly in the area of sacramental theology. Much more dialogue is needed.

But the sometimes amazing and always joyful realization remains: in almost all things we are brethren: one Lord, one Church, one baptism, one Eucharist, one Bible, and virtually one faith. It is fitting to end this study with the phrase of Max Thurian quoted in Chapter I:

"L'Eglise reste la communauté de l'espérance."[2]

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[1] Douglas Jones, Review of The Eucharistic Memorial, by Max Thurian, Journal of Theological Studies, new series, XV (April, 1964), p. 219.

[2] Thurian, La foi en crise, p. 14.

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